LIFE AND TIMES OF

MALIK AMBAR

RADHEY SHYAM

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PREFACE

MALIK Ambar was a link between the two creative epochs of Mahmud Gawan and Mir Jumla. Like them he played his part and heightened the prestige of the Deccan. Though pitted against heavy odds and unsurmountable difficulties, with boundless enthusiasm and unflinching zeal he fought those who threatened the independent existence of his kingdom. While doing so, neither did he ignore the imperative needs of the local population on whose support he depended for his success and nor the materialisation of his future plans and ambitious schemes. Another man of lesser calibre would have not dared to embark upon schemes of such far-reaching consequences. He evolved out a new administrative pattern and gave a new life to his country. He won admiration of friends and foes alike. He created in the Marathas the urge to defend their country. By channelising their energy into fruitful efforts he unconsciously sowed the seeds of Maratha unity. And certainly, it was because of his efforts that later the Maratha leaders like Shahji and Shivaji could successfully continue their struggle against their enemies. They had inherited a tradition from him and they rigidly sustained it.

I express my gratitude to those who inspired me to write this small monograph. I also crave the indulgence of the readers for shortcomings.

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RADHEY SHYAM

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MUGHAL EMPIRE
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ELICHPUR
MEHKAR
MALKAPUR
DAULTABAD
AURANGABAD
JALNA
R. GODAVARI
NASIK
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INDAPUR
BIDAR
ARABIAN SEA
PURANDHAR
SHOLAPUR
BANKOT
BIJAPUR
DABHOL
KINGDOM OF AHMADNAGAR IN 1601 A.D.
BOUNDARIES EXTENDED FROM 1601 TO 1626

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

NATURE invariably moulds the historical destiny of the groups of people living in the specified areas. The most glaring example of the truth of this statement is to be found in the thrilling achievements and the glorious failures of the inhabitants of the Deccan, the region enclosed by the Vindhya and Satpura ranges. Its compactness was compartmentalised into self-sufficient units by swift running streams and mutually intersecting hills capped by precipitous heights looking like perennial sentinels mounting guard against aggression and affording shelter for peaceful pursuits. This barren and sterile region produced men of boundless energy and obstinate stamina, who knew how to live dedicated and simple life. Their wants were few, but their ambitions were high. Like the Rajputs and the Pathans they were very sensitive to the feelings of self-respect and wedded to the idea of parochial independence. But unlike them they could wait patiently for avenging their wounded susceptibilities. They were cool and calculating in forming their designs and swift and agile in executing them. They could play the role of mercenaries and patriots with equal fervour.

The Deccan was the water-shed between the imperialistic north and feudalistic south. Naturally it pulsated with the traditions and ideals of both. It developed a culture which was intensely circumscribed in its pattern but universal in its contents. It generated balance in proper proportions and adjustments within proper limits. It was averse to tolerating dominance in any form. The feudal lords laid the foundations of the dynasties and kingdoms. The struggle between the strong

and the weak went on incessantly and so did the process of construction and destruction. The patterns changed but the underlying currents continued to flow unabated. The people of this region had always to depend upon their own oars. There was always continuity in the idea of preserving the peculiar Deccani culture and the political independence of the country by repelling the invasions from the north and resisting the penetration of "New Culture." The people of the Deccan always maintained proper balance between the political powers of the north and south, by checking the advancement of the two in opposite direction with a view to attain imperial status. If any of the two succeeded in its effort the other did not take rest until it had brought down the imperial fabric. Balance in proper proportions, adjustment within certain limits could be tolerated by the Deccanis but not the dominance of any power. This was the tradition which they inherited from their ancestors.

The last quarter of the fourteenth century saw the emergence and the growth of the Bahmani Kingdom, which produced remarkable rulers like ʿAlauddin Bahman Shah, Mahmud Shah, Firuz Shah Bahmani and far-sighted administrator like Mahmud Gawan and others. True that the internal history of the kingdom was merely a record of factional fights, civil wars, extravagance and debauchery on the part of some rulers, yet the people, nobles and the rulers never allowed the political powers of the north and the south to make the Deccan the graveyard of its ideals. The remarkable cultural contributions of the rulers and the nobles and their efforts to bring about the cultural fusion overshadow their evils or weaknesses. They were not ascetics or superhuman beings, who could live far away from the purple wine and beautiful women. With their dazzling sword and sharp-edged spears, they shattered the dreams of the rulers of Malwa, Gujarat and Khandesh for southward expansion, and of the rulers of Orissa and Vijayanagar for the northward advancement. Surrounded by ambitious political potentates on the borders of their kingdoms and by the ambitious self-seeking foreign and native nobles, the later Bahmani sovereigns found it difficult either to maintain the balance between the rival groups at home or to check the process of decline and degeneration. The party conflict became bitter on account of the open condemnation of the Deccanis by the

foreigners. This in due course ruined the prestige of the Kingdom and also led the neighbouring states to cast their greedy eyes upon its territorial possessions. The fratricidal wars which the Bahmani Sultans fought against the neighbouring powers to save their territories exhausted their resources.[1] They found it difficult to save their collapsing house. Such a situation gave a fine opportunity to Malik-Ahmad Nizam-al-Mulk, son of Malik Hasan Bahri, a person born and brought up in the Deccan and in whose veins ran the indigenous blood, to raise the standard of revolt, snap political connections from the weak, helpless Bahmani Sultan and to lay the foundations of an independent kingdom.[2] The example of Malik Ahmad was followed by the other Deccani and foreign nobles who too withdrew their allegiance and declared their independence. Thus, by the end of fifteenth century, five independent Indo-Turkish kingdoms came into existence. This occurred when stirring events were taking place in the north because of the declining fortunes of the Tughlaq dynasty, Timur's invasion and the rise of independent kingdoms there.

The succession states, inherited all the virtues and the vices of the parent Bahmani kingdom. The kingdom of Ahmadnagar, which extended from the Narbada to Bhima soon involved itself in the conflict with the rulers of Bijapur, Bidar, Berar and Golkunda on the one hand, Khandesh and Gujarat on the other. Thus opened a new chapter of offensive and defensive wars in the history of the Deccan. The ambition to establish supremacy over the entire Deccan led to the organisation of coalitions amongst the rulers, the weaker joining the stronger, which in due course deepened the conflict. After the kingdom of Vijayanagar had been forced to quit the political stage, the kingdom of Berar and Bidar too became the victims of aggressive designs of the rulers of Ahmadnagar and Bijapur. Fortunately, in the North, in the period from 1490 A.D. and 1564 A.D. there was no powerful state, leaving aside the independent kingdoms of Malwa and Gujarat and Khandesh,

[1] For details see, H.K. Sherwani, *The Bahmanis of the Deccan.*

[2] For the history of the kingdom of Ahmadnagar, see my work, *The Kingdom of Ahmadnagar.*

which could embark upon the project of Southward expansion. This, no doubt, gave some relief to the people of the Deccan but the internecine wars hardly gave them the opportunity to make bold experiments in the field of administration, architecture, literature and music. However, credit must be given to these rulers for keeping some control over the political ambitions of the Portuguese, who had established themselves on the western coast. The Nizam Shahis and the Adil Shahis pursued the policy of conciliation and coercion, while dealing with them. Besides, one can hardly find anything worth appreciating in the political record of the Deccani states, except that they fought amongst themselves to defend their local interests and culture. Still then there is something very remarkable in this struggle i.e. that the rulers, nobles and people had firm faith in cultural integration.

Despite the political confusion, the people of the Deccan felt contented with what they had at their disposal. Feudalism had created in them the urge to be loyal towards their masters. Towards the close of the sixteenth century history repeated itself. The kingdom of Ahmadnagar which in the earlier century had brought about the fall of the Bahmani, Vijayanagar and the kingdom of Berar, now presented a scene of party-strife, murders and dethronements. After the death of Murtaza Nizam Shah I, disruptive forces began to gain momentum. The outbreak of religious fanaticism, resulting in the conflict between the shias and the Mahdhvis, bloodshed, mass deportation of the foreigners, soldiers, politicians, administrators and learned men to the neighbouring states, shook the foundations of this state. The debauchery and the incompetency of the later Nizam Shahi kings created alarming situation to the extent that the frontiers of the kingdom were left exposed and undefended. The rulers of the neighbouring states were not slow to miss the opportunity of settling their old counts with the Nizam Shahis by seizing territorial slices from the Nizam Shahi kingdom.

The deteriorating political condition of the Nizam Shahi kingdom also attracted the attention of the Mughal Emperor Akbar. By this time a few political refugees from Ahmadnagar had found their way to the Mughal court, where they must have narrated the story of political chaos and confusion prevailing in the kingdom. The Emperor felt encouraged to

embark upon the project of Southward expansion of the Mughal empire. Apparently there was no difficulty in implementing this scheme for the boundaries of the Mughal empire, after the conquest of Malwa and Gujarat touched the boundaries of the Deccan and his relations with the Rathors and Kachwahas provided him a safe passage to the Deccan. With hundreds of Rajput generals, soldiers and tremendous resources at his command Akbar sought to accomplish this task in a short period. But the conquest and occupation of the Deccan was not so easy as he had considered.

There were many other factors which induced the Mughal emperors to set his forces in motion towards the Deccan. The chaos and confusion in the neighbouring kingdom, if on the one hand was a menace to the safety of the Mughal empire, on the other a serious challenge to the peace-loving Mughal government and the principles on which it had been established. Moreover, after the consolidation of the empire in northern India its southward expansion was the logic of history. The process of conquest would have remained incomplete without the establishment of his supremacy over the rulers of the Deccan. Further, he must have felt with great anxiety, as to what would be the position of the Portuguese after the fall of the Nizam Shahis ? The increasing pressure of the Portuguese, the Dutch and subsequently the English, in fact was seriously affecting the political and economic life of the country. Their further advancement in the economic sphere and interference with the political life was neither tolerable nor desirable. Thus, the economic and political interests of the Mughal empire ran counter to the interests of European factors. The only way to check their growing influence was to send the imperial forces to the Deccan, persuade the rulers of the Deccan to acknowledge the sovereignty of the Mughal Emperor. The very acknowledgement of the Mughal sovereignty by them would have given the latter the opportunity of dealing with the Portuguese with their help and cooperation. But the manner in which the rulers of the Deccan behaved, on account of their failure to understand the plans of the Mughal Emperor, shows that uptil now they were completely unaware of the deep consequences of the over-increasing interest which the foreigners were taking in their political affairs. The onrush of the Mughal

forces, compelled them partly to depend upon themselves and partly upon the Portuguese. Even then, it was a very difficult task for them to face the blows of the mighty Mughal power of the north and the music of the nobles at their court, who were divided into two groups, one in favour of close alliance with the Mughals and the other against it. Such a situation demanded quick decision and bold action. The rulers were called upon either to accept the Mughal supremacy or to face the aggression.

Being a shrewd politician how could Akbar remain a silent spectator to what was happening in the Deccan. He set the ball rolling by giving protection to Burhan, the brother of Murtaza Nizam Shah I, who having failed in his bid to depose his brother, fled to the north and along with others presented himself before the Mughal throne.[1] Now with a large number of deserters from the Nizam Shahi court Akbar began to contemplate ambitious schemes regarding the conquest of the Deccan. Abul Fazl writes that, "It was His Majesty's intention that when the affairs of the eastern districts had been excellently arranged he would proceed towards the Deccan and introduce order there." But the rebellions in Gujarat led him to postpone the idea of invading the Deccan in 1583.[2] Two years later he invited those who had rebelled against Murtaza Nizam Shah I in Berar. He welcomed them, showered favours upon them and gave them lucrative *jagirs*. A little later while celebrating the feast of *Sharf* he honoured Burhan-al-Mulk by conferring upon him the rank of 500,[3] and then in the same year sent Khan Azim towards the Deccan. The fiefs of Garha and Raisan were conferred upon the latter and Abdul-muttalib Khan, Rajah Askaran, Shirazi Khan, Mir Jamaluddin Husain Anju, Burhan-al-Mulk Deccani, Abdur Rahman son of Muyid Beg and others were sent with him to evaluate the conditions prevailing in the Deccan and prepare the ground for Mughal invasion on the Deccan in future.[4] Upon his arrival in the Deccan, Khan Azim attacked Berar but with no success. He then sent a body of

[1] *Akbar Nama*, (Beveridge) Vol. III, pp. 603-5.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 626.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 687.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 701.

troops to attack the frontiers of the Nizam Shahi kingdom. The Mughal troops captured the fort of Sanoli by defeating Nahar Rao, the Nizam Shahi commander. In a similar way Khan Azim compelled the landholders of the adjoining districts to submit. The Emperor conferred upon him the newly acquired area as jagir. But on account of the differences amongst his officers Khan Azim Mirza Aziz Kokah could not make any progress in the direction of further conquests.[1] The concentration of the Mughal forces on the borders of southern Malwa and northern Deccan alarmed Raja Ali Khan, the ruler of Khandesh. The latter immediately concluded an offensive and defensive alliance with the Nizam Shah, dismissed the Mughal envoy Amir Fathullah Shirazi, refused to further the Mughal interests and joined Farhad Khan, Jamshed Khan, Azdar Khan, Mir Taqi and others of Berar and Ahmadnagar forces to defeat the Mughals and stop their further advance. Upon this Mirza Aziz Kokah sent another body of troops to Kherla. Although this army could not establish its hold over the fort of Kherla but it succeeded in ravaging and plundering certain parts of Berar and Elichpur.[2] On the latter place they established their hold. Thereafter some of the advisers of Mirza suggested him to proceed further and lay hands upon Ahmadnagar but others dissuaded him to do so. He was advised by the other party to consolidate the Mughal position in the recently conquered territory and then think of making fresh conquests by stages. This group also suggested that before the enemy grows stronger we should retire to Gujarat for the time being and then after making full preparations reappear to accomplish the task. The Mirza accepted their advice and ordered for retreat. For the Deccanis it was a splendid opportunity to deliver attack in the rear. They moved and attacked the imperialists, sacked Hindia, set fire to it and engaged them in open battle near the town of Chandaur. The Deccanis defeated them and pursued them up to a distance. But in another battle the imperialists defeated them and put them to flight. Thus with great difficulty the imperialists managed to reach Nadarbar, where they halted to take rest. Shortly after, the Deccanis boldly advanced,

[1] *Akbar Nama*, Vol. III, p. 739.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 740.

entered that region and stirred up strife there but were subsequently compelled to withdraw to the Khandesh.

Upon his arrival in Gujarat Mirza Aziz Kokah was welcomed by Khan Khanan, who also joined him with a large army to further his designs. Before opening the offensive, the two generals preferred to open negotiations with the leader of the Deccani forces. They sent Mir Abu Turab to negotiate for peace. Mir Abu Turab succeeded in his mission. Consequently peace was concluded and by way of friendly gesture the Deccanis sent presents to the governors of Malwa and Gujarat.[1] Thus, in this manner the imperialists tried to make their way to the Deccan.

The close alliance between the rulers of Ahmadnagar and Khandesh and the determination of their rulers to repel the Mughal attacks and safeguard the territorial integrity of the Deccan compelled Emperor Akbar to wait for another opportunity to open the offensive. The opportunity came after the death of Murtaza Nizam Shah I when the conditions at Ahmadnagar further deteriorated. Akbar decided to make use of Burhan for prosecuting his ambitious designs. He recalled Burhan-al-Mulk from his jagir in Bangash, held consultations with him and asked him to go to the Deccan and seize the sceptre of authority from the hands of his son Ismael Nizam Shah.[2] The die was cast on the political chess-board of the Deccan and the game was started by the Mughal Emperor. In pursuance of his plans he honoured Burhan-al-Mulk by allotting him the frontier district of Hindia in *Jagir* in the hope that after seizing the Nizam Shahi crown, he will accept the Mughal suzerainty.[3] He also gave instructions to Raja Ali Khan, the ruler of Khandesh and Mirza Aziz Kokah, the governor of Malwa to extend their assistance to him in the enterprise.[4]

[1] *Akbar Nama*, Vol. III, p. 742.

[2] *Ferishta*, III, p. 279; *Akbar Nama*, Vol. III, pp. 819-20.

[3] *Ferishta*, Vol. III, p. 279.

[4] *Akbar Nama*, Vol. III, pp. 821-22, Dr. Tripathi does not mention the name of Raja Ali Khan, See. *Rise and Fall of the Mughal Empire* p. 315 ; *Ferishta* III, p. 279 ; *Tabqat-i-Akbari* III, pp. 75-76 ; *Basatin-us-Salatin*, pp. 200-201 ; *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, II, pp. 423, 466.

Burhan-al-Mulk did not fail to understand the game of the Mughal Emperor. Thus before leaving the north he told him clearly that he had no objection in taking the assistance of the Mughals except that on reaching the frontiers of the Nizam Shahi kingdom, the Deccanis might feel perturbed and object to his bringing the foreigners with him. He proposed that he should be allowed to go there with his own dependants and upon reaching there he would try to gain over his subjects by conciliatory means. The Emperor agreed and approved his proposal and permitted him to leave for the Deccan.

Accordingly, Burhan marched towards Hindia, from where he proceeded towards the frontiers of Berar along with the forces of Raja Ali Khan and Mirza Aziz Kokah, and opened negotiations with some of the Nizam Shahi nobles of Berar and Ahmadnagar. Their hearty response and the acceptance of his proposals, so much encouraged him that he requested Raja Ali Khan and the Mughal commander to stay on the borders of Berar, watch the situation and allow him to go alone. His suggestion was accepted. Accompanied by a few adherents Burhan entered Berar where he was joined by large number of Nizam Shahi nobles. Being confident of his success he made a dash towards Ahmadnagar but was defeated. He made another attempt and succeeded in defeating and deposing his son Ismael and ascending the throne on 15th May, 1591 A.D.[1]

After ascending the throne Burhan Nizam Shah II addressed himself to the task of putting the Nizam Shahi house in order by suppressing the disruptive forces. He showed courage in dealing with the Mahdhavis, Portuguese and the ruler of Bijapur.[2] Since he had gained the throne with the moral assistance of Raja Ali Khan and material assistance of some of the Nizam Shahi nobles, and on account of his own tact and political foresight he felt no obligation towards the Mughal Emperor Akbar, whose forces he had left behind. Here he proved himself cleverer than the Mughal Emperor. In fact

[1] *Akbar Nama*, III, pp. 891-3; *Ferishta* III, pp. 279-80; *Burhan-i-Maasir* (I.A. 1923) p. 290, *Basatin-us-Salatin*, pp. 204-5; *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, III, pp. 75-6.

[2] *Ferishta*, III, pp. 283-7.

Burhan Nizam Shah knew what was meant by acceptance of the Mughal suzerainty. He was also quite aware of the consequences of the entry of the Mughal soldiers in the Nizam Shahi country. He rightly believed that after having crossed the border they would never return. Therefore after sitting firmly in the saddle, Burhan Nizam Shah II not only ignored the wishes of the Mughal Emperor but also opposed his policy of southward expansion by refusing to acknowledge his suzerainty.

His deceitful conduct annoyed the Mughal Emperor. The latter sent poet-laureate Mulku-sh-Shu'ra Abul Faiz Faizi along with Aminuddin to Raja Ali Khan and Burhan Nizam Shah II, to request the former to warn the latter and to pursuade him to accept the Mughal suzerainty, otherwise be prepared for the serious consequences of ingratitude shown to him.[1] At the same time Mir Muhammad Rizvi and Mir Manir, two Mughal ambassadors were sent to the rulers of Bijapur and Golkunda, ostensibly with the object of persuading them to accept the Mughal suzerainty, but in reality to evaluate the strength of the two states and their relations with Burhan Nizam Shah II.[2] This was Akbar's another hit to bring Nizam Shah under his control. But the wind was moving in the opposite direction. Knowing that the Mughal Emperor was busy with the problems of the north-western frontiers and that he was not in a position to seriously turn his attention towards them, the rulers of Bijapur and Golkunda dismissed the Mughal envoys with costly presents and polite words. The conduct of Burhan Nizam Shah was different. He relying upon the support of the neighbouring powers, treated the Mughal envoy Aminuddin clumsily, charged him of plundering some merchants in the way and dismissed him unceremoniously.[3] His arrogant behaviour towards the Mughal envoy enraged the Emperor. The latter took this diplomatic defeat seriously for it injured his prestige. He now realised that diplomatic game without being supported with military power shall never produce the desired results.

[1] *Akbar-Nama*, III, p. 909 ; *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, II, p. 425 ; *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, p. 390.

[2] *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 909.

[3] *Akbar Nama* III, p. 982 ; *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, II, p. 425 ; *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, pp. 390-403.

By now conditions had changed in the Deccan. Raja Ali Khan, evaluating the strength of the imperialists decided to conclude peace with the Mughals. He gave the hands of his daughter in marriage to the Prince Royal and thereby cemented bonds of friendship with the Mughal Emperor.[1] The arrival of Mir Manir from Golkunda with rich tributes in his hands and bundle of information regarding the internal politics of the Deccani states, strengthened the determination of the Mughal Emperor to prosecute his schemes relentlessly.[2] He appointed Prince Daniyal to chastise Burhan Nizam Shah II, and ordered Khan Khanan, Rai Singh and many other officers to accompany him. Huge treasures and a park of artillery and a large number of elephants were placed at the disposal of the Prince. Orders were also given to Shah Rukh Mirza, Shah Baaz Khan and other fief holders of Malwa to equip troops and accompany the Prince to the Deccan. Likewise Raja Man Singh was also ordered to return post-haste from Bengal and move towards the Deccan along with his troops. At the same time, Prince Murad and Shah Rukh Mirza, who had been recently appointed to the governorship of Gujarat and Malwa, were asked to make complete preparations for an offensive war against the Nizam Shahis of Ahmadnagar.[3] But Prince Daniyal's marriage and his prolonged stay at Sirhind barred the movement of the imperial forces towards the Deccan. The rainy season started. With the result that the Emperor had to give up the idea of sending the Prince to the Deccan. He called the Khan Khanan, took advice from him and then ordered the Prince not to move from Punjab until further orders.[4] For sometime more the Emperor waited to strike at the roots of the Nizam Shahi kingdom. On 18th April 1595 A.D. Burhan Nizam Shah II died.[5] His death provided the Emperor another opportunity to interfere with the politics of the Deccan.

Ibrahim Nizam Shah, who succeeded Burhan on the Nizam Shahi throne appointed Mian Manjhu Deccani, as prime minister. Conditions now assumed alarming proportions at the

[1] *Akbar-Nama*, III, p. 982.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 990.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 995.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 996.
[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 1023-25

Nizam Shahi capital, which was torn by party strife. There was no unity amongst the nobles. Their intensive selfishness led them to sacrifice the interests of the state. Nor there was any one who could affect reconciliation amongst the warring factions. The new prime minister made feeble efforts to restore law and order by granting amnesty to Ikhlas Khan, the leader of Abyssinians but in vain. The immediate outcome of this policy of reconciliation was, that the tussle between the two rival groups became bitter. It did not take long for the leaders of the two groups to come into open clash. The throne, being occupied by a puppet and his court being full of sycophants, the tension between the rival groups was inevitable. After sometime it began to mount with unusual speed. The cause of this conflict was neither religious nor racial, but it lay entirely in the clash of their personal ambitions. Both Mian Manjhu and Ikhlas Khan were ambitious to gain an upper hand at the court. It was impossible for them to see eye to eye on the political and administrative questions or on policy to be pursued towards the Adil Shahi kingdom of Bijapur which had coveted a slice of the Nizam Shahi kingdom. Since the war party at the court was in a favourable position it unnecessarily precipitated the crisis by insulting the Adil Shahi ambassador. A war against Bijapur at this juncture when the Mughal pressure was increasing on the borders of the kingdom was undesirable. But at the same time it was unavoidable. However when it stared in the face, it became difficult to avert it. The battle took place, and Sultan Ibrahim Nizam Shah lost his life. The death of the Sultan decided the fate of the battle. Amidst great confusion the Nizam Shahi generals fled towards the capital to repent upon the course of action followed by Ikhlas Khan. This defeat displayed the hollowness of the Nizam Shahi government. The disease from which it was suffering so long was now partly visible.[1]

Mian Manjhu, the prime minister without losing a moment returned to Ahmadnagar, entered the fort with his men, occupied it and seized the royal treasures. He summoned Ikhlas Khan and other nobles to hold joint consultations on the management of the affairs of the state and for selecting a monarch for the

[1] *Ferishta*, III, pp. 288-91 ; *Akbar Nama*, III, pp. 1025 ; 1028.

Nizam Shahi throne. Before the arrival of the nobles and without consulting them Mian Manjhu sent for Ahmad, a boy of twelve years, from Daultabad, with a view to instal him on the throne.[1] He acted in a haste to safeguard his own position not knowing the consequences of it. When Chand Bibi came to know of it, she came out in open protest and pressed the claims of Bahadur, the only son of the late king.[2] While advocating the candidature of Bahadur, she only depended upon the support of the Abyssinian nobles. But very soon she was isolated from the latter who were won over by Mian Manjhu and Ikhlas Khan. The two leaders of the rival groups had come to terms, to oust Chand Bibi, for they feared the intervention of Ibrahim Adil Shah in the internal affairs of the Nizam Shahi kingdom. Seeing that she would not abandon her candidate, both Mian Manjhu and Ikhlas Khan, after making bold attempt seized Bahadur from her hands throwing both of them behind the bars and they proclaimed Ahmad as King on 16th August 1595 A.D.[3]

Who was this Ahmad ? No one knew about him except Mian Manjhu. The boy had been brought from the fort of Daultabad, to gratify the ambitions of the selfish noble. It appears from Ferishta's account that Ahmad's father Shah Tahir was an impostor. According to him Burhan Nizam Shah I, had six sons namely, Miran Shah Husain, Muhammad Khudabanda, Shah Ali, Muhammad Bakr, Abdul Qadir and Shah Haidar. During the closing years of his reign, war of succession broke out in which Miran Husain emerged out victorious. Consequently, after the death of Burhan Nizam Shah I, he ascended the throne and his other brothers fled and took refuge in the neighbouring states. In the later half of the reign of Murtaza Nizam Shah I, a person calling himself Shah Tahir arrived at Daultabad telling the people that he was Khudabanda's son, his father had

[1] According to Abul Fazl, Ahmad was the son of Khudabanda, See *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 1028; *Ferishta*, III, pp. 293-5; *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, III, p. 246; *Burhan-i-Maasir* (I.A. 1898) p. 233; Dr. Tripathi, *The Rise and Fall of the Mughal Empire*, p. 320.

[2] *Ferishta* III, p. 293; *Basatin-us-Salatin*, p. 223.

[3] *Ferishta* III, p. 293.

died in Bengal and since he had been reduced to miserable plight, he had come to the Deccan. Some of the nobles became interested in him. They represented to the King that the parentage of Shah Tahir be ascertained. On account of the long distance, and the period which had elapsed since the death of Burhan Nizam Shah I, the facts could not be satisfactorily collected. Hence, the parentage of Shah Tahir remained in doubt. Still he continued to claim the royal descent. In order to avert the possibility of claiming the throne, Murtaza Nizam Shah kept him in confinement. Meanwhile, he sent a few persons who were well acquainted with Prince Khudabanda's family to Agra to ascertain the facts from his nephew Burhan, who had taken shelter at Akbar's court. Burhan narrated the true story of his uncle Khudabanda's death and the fact that he died at his house and his entire family was living with him. After these facts had been collected in this manner, Salabat Khan, the able and wise minister of Murtaza Nizam Shah I deemed it proper to keep Shah Tahir under strict surveillance so that in future he could never assert his claims on the Nizam Shahi throne. Accordingly, Shah Tahir was imprisoned in the fort of Daultabad, where he died sometime afterwards leaving behind a son named Ahmad. Thus, according to Ferishta, Shah Tahir, the son of Khudabanda was an impostor.[1] But Abul Fazl does not regard Shah Tahir as impostor. According to him, Ahmad was not the son of Shah Tahir but of Khudabanda.[2] However, since both the historians offer different views it is difficult to arrive at any definite conclusion. Whosoever he might be, he was raised to the throne to gratify the ambition of Mian Manjhu to play the role of king maker. Since Mian Manjhu himself did not know much about the parentage of Ahmad, how long could he conceal his ignorance. No sooner it was revealed that Ahmad had no connections with the royal family, differences arose between the leaders of the Deccani and Abyssinian party. Ikhlas Khan the leader of the Abyssinian party now began to make concerted efforts for bringing about the deposition of Ahmad and fall of Mian Manjhu. Placed in an

[1] *Ferishta* III, pp. 293-5.
[2] *Akbar Nama*; III, p. 1028.

alarming situation, surrounded by the enemies from all sides and having lost the support and confidence of a very influential group, Mian Manjhu was left with no alternative than that of leaving the fort in the company of few Deccani followers. Before affecting his escape he strengthened the defences of the fort to withstand the onslaughts of his rival Ikhlas Khan who had surrounded the fort and had laid siege to it. Ikhlas Khan finding himself in a strong position not only blockaded the regular approaches to the fort but also sent messages to the governor of the fort of Daultabad to release Abhang Khan and Habsh Khan, the Abyssinians. The governor complied with the orders and released the Abyssinian leaders. The arrival of Abhang Khan strengthened the position of Ikhlas Khan. The latter now sent an order to the governor of the fort of Chaund to deliver Bahadur Nizam to him. But the governor refused to hand over that Prince without the express orders of Mian Manjhu. Without resorting to any other course Ikhlas Khan procured a child of the same age from the market and proclaimed him as descendant of the late Ibrahim Nizam Shah. In this manner he collected round him a large army of 1200 horse to defeat his rival Mian Manjhu. He pressed the siege with vigour, unnerved Mian Manjhu and compelled him to play another trick which he should have not. He sent letters to Prince Murad, Abdur Rahim Khan Khanan and Mirza Aziz Kokah, the governor of Malwa requesting them to come to his assistance. These letters were duly acknowledged by each one of them and forwarded to the Mughal Emperor for suitable instructions. The Mughal Emperor was already waiting for such an opportunity. He therefore, immediately issued instructions to Prince Murad for the mobilisation of the imperial troops towards the Deccan. He also directed Raja Ali Khan to give a free passage to the imperial forces through his country and give all possible help in the forthcoming enterprise.[1]

But before Prince Murad could advance towards the Deccan, an unpredictable turn took place in the affairs of the Nizam Shahi capital. Here the Abyssinian chiefs fell out among themselves over the question of distribution of offices. Dissensions

[1] *Ferishta* III, p. 296; *Basatin-us-Salatin*, p. 223; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, pp. 439-40.

in the camp of Ikhlas Khan was followed by desertions in his ranks on a large scale, the deserters going over to Mian Manjhu who was still inside the fort. An increase in the number of his followers created some confidence in Mian Manjhu to control the situation. Taking advantage of the weak position of Ikhlas Khan, he delivered a surprise attack on him, defeated him and put him to flight along with his Abyssinian followers and supporters. Not only this he also seized, a candidate of Ikhlas Khan for the throne and imprisoned him.[1] The success he achieved in removing Chand Bibi and Ikhlas Khan from the political arena further buttressed his position. But it was too late. He now realised that he had committed a great blunder in having invited the Mughal assistance. He repented on his own folly, but decided to show courage and capacity in turning the tide of the Mughal aggression.[2]

The news of the appearance of Prince Murad on the borders of the Deccan at the head of well organised, disciplined and trained imperial forces compelled Mian Manjhu to throw away the mask and pose as the champion of the Nizam Shahi cause and the saviour of the Nizam Shahi kingdom. With the little political acumen, he possessed, he made plans to resist the enemy and check the advance of the imperial forces towards the capital. Even this task was a difficult one because of the presence of enemies on all sides. At this critical hour the relations with the rulers of the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkunda were neither cordial nor friendly. Inside the capital too, there was no unity amongst the nobles nor there was any enthusiasm to preserve the territorial integrity and political independence. A little help from the Portuguese was insufficient to strengthen the position of the defenders in the event of a concerted attack. Yet with meagre resources at his disposal, Mian Manjhu struggled to safeguard the interests of his kingdom. He sent Saadat Khan, a very powerful and important noble of Burhan Nizam Shah II, to Kolaba and Nasik districts to offer opposition to the rapidly advancing Mughal forces.[3] For a little while,

[1] Abul Fazl describes Moti as the son of Qasim, the son of Burhan Nizam Shah I. See *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 1028.

[2] *Ferishta* III, pp. 296-7.

[3] *Burhan-i-Maasir*, (Text, Hyderabad) p. 595.

he barred their progress but had to return because of the smallness of number of soldiers at his command. His withdrawal from the key position left the road of Ahmadnagar open for the enemy.[1] The danger appeared in its nakedness. The further advance of the imperialists compelled him to behave like a straw before the storm. Circumstances demanded bold and cautious policy, which he was totally incapable of inducting. Nor could he take firm decision. All the cards now lay open on the table but he wavered to decide as to which one he should pick up first. His courage was failing and his confidence shaking. His nerves were so shattered that he saw the ghost of the enemy every where. He was indifferent towards Chand Bibi, apprehensive of her noble intentions and always looked upon her with awe and suspicion. Similar was his attitude towards other nobles. Whenever they advised him to face the Mughals boldly he read sinister designs in their suggestions.[2] At last finding himself between the jaws of defeat and death Mian Manjhu decided to put down the refractory elements at the court, who favoured a pro-Mughal policy. Then he turned against those who suggested him to oppose the Mughals.

[1] *Burhan-i-Maasir*, p. 595.

[2] Mujahid-ud-ddin Shamshir Khan Habshi opposed his intention to leave the fort. He said to him that "to fly from enemy's army without contemplating battle and using sword and spear and leaving the plains of the dominions and all the subjects to be trampled only by enemy's army does not commend itself to men of sincerity and faith." Upon this Mian Manjhu replied, "The enemy's force is double that of the Dakhan and in the battle it is possible that a thousand kind of troubles and afflictions—perhaps a fatal misfortune may happen and all the elephants, artillery and the foundations of sovereignty and power may fall into enemy's hands, for the sages have said "He is a wise man who avoids fighting one stronger than himself and the obligations of vigilance and caution as far as possible, not to resort to war."

"Attack not a force greater than your own,
For one cannot strike one's finger on a lancet."

Mian Manjhu continued, "It is absurd for a few drops of rain to claim equality with the infinite ocean or for the insignificant motes to imagine themselves equal to the sun beams. The best plan is to take refuge with Ibrahim Adil Shah and fly to his court and from the servants of that court and from Qutb Shah seek assistance and with the strength oppose the enemy's army."

See. *Burhan-i-Maasir* (Text) p. 597-598.

His inconsistent behaviour at this critical moment when the enemy was knocking at the doors was not liked by any one. Obviously he became an object of severe criticism. The foreign nobles joined the Deccanis in putting upon his head the blame for having invited the Mughals. His integrity was questioned; his actions confirmed that he was going to play a treacherous role. It was very unfortunate that a person born and brought up in the Deccan, placed in difficult situation instead of facing the enemy had now decided to sell the freedom of his countrymen; while the Abyssinians and other foreign nobles, were striving hard to defend the country at all costs. In these tragic circumstances no one was dependable or reliable. One did what he thought proper. Opportunists rose to power by fishing in troubled waters. The same thing can be said about the foreigners in this country. Had they extended assistance to Mian Manjhu perhaps the latter would have not only changed his decision to quit the fort of Ahmadnagar but would have remained there to put up a strong resistance to the invader. Realising that the ground had become slippery on account of the shifting loyalties of the Nizam Shahi nobles and that it was difficult to walk on it smoothly, Mian Manjhu, promoted Shamshir Khan to the rank of *Amir-ul-Umra* and appointed him as commander of the province of Ahmadnagar and ordered him to protect the dominions and the subjects. Likewise he conferred the office of *Kotwal* of the fort of Ahmadnagar on his friend Ansar Khan and thereafter on the pretext of soliciting assistance of Ibrahim Adil Shah and Quli Qutb Shah, he left the fort of Ahmadnagar. A little later, Ahmad Nizam Shah, his protege, also left the fort, taking with him all the cash, old valuables, 300 elephants, artillery, all the paraphernalia of sovereignty and about 8000 cavalry men. He proceeded towards Bir to join his benefactor Mian Manjhu.

Not being willing to leave the fort and desert cause of Nizam Shahi family, a large number of nobles such as Afzal Khan, Maulana Shamshuddin, Muhammad Lari, the ambassador of Ibrahim Adil Shah and Maulana Haji Isphahani, the ambassador of Quli Qutb Shah, Habiullah Khan and Sayyid Ali Tabatba preferred to stay in the fort and watch the situation. Their stay inside the fort caused apprehension in the mind of Mian Manjhu, who sent a person to Safdar Khan the governor

of the fort of Burhanabad to ask him to seize the entire park of artillery, rockets etc. along with the foreigners and bring them to his camp. Safdar Khan consequently fell upon the foreigners, brought Habibullah Khan and Asad Khan and many others to him and forced them to join his standards.

When Chand Bibi came to know of the flight of the mischief makers, she appeared in the fort of Ahmadnagar, took the reins of administration into her own hands to settle the affairs of the country and offer resistance to the Mughals, whom Mian Manjhu had invited. She settled the internal affairs of the kingdom by ironing out the differences amongst the leaders of different factions, by winning over their confidence, purchasing their loyalties and by making an appeal to them to find out ways and means for averting the approaching calamity. She strengthened the defences of the fort of Ahmadnagar, collected forces and resources and with the consent of her supporters proclaimed her candidate Bahadur Nizam as king. Events now began to move faster than the wind.

Prince Murad left Ahmadabad on 30th Oct. 1594 and stayed at Baroch for sometime. The Khan Khanan after collecting his men marched and passed sometime in his jagir at Bhilsa. He started for Ujjain on 19th July 1595. From October to July thus the Prince had to wait for the arrival of Khan Khanan. The inordinate delay on the part of Khan Khanan annoyed the Prince to the extent that he wrote a letter to him and therein expressed his indignation. In reply, the Khan Khanan wrote that since he was not quite sure of the friendly attitude of Raja Ali Khan he thought it prudent to wait for a little while in Gujarat. This further incensed the Prince, who was in a hurry to move and attack the fort of Ahmadnagar, where a different panorama was unfolding in itself. The unnecessary delay caused by Khan Khanan's slow marches and the anxiety of the Prince to attack before it was too late, drew them apart. Without waiting for Khan Khanan and his men, Prince Murad marched towards Ahmadnagar. A little later Khan Khanan, Raja Ali Khan and Shah Rukh Mirza and others reached Chandore, where the Prince was encamping. The Prince out of his sheer inexperience refused to admit any of them to audience. Consequently mutual jealousies gained an upper hand. Khan Khanan and many of his auxiliary troops felt disgusted at the attitude

of the Prince and withdrew hands. Likewise Sadiq Muhammed Khan quarrelled with Shah Baaz Khan on account of his old grudge and the latter apprehending his foul play never went to attend the *darbar*. Thus from the very beginning, the Prince had to face the rivalries and jealousies of his officers. Still he did not lose courage and on 18th December 1595 A.D. he in company of the Khan Khanan, Raja Ali Khan appeared on the outskirts of the city of Ahmadnagar. After taking a little rest and making preliminary arrangements Prince Murad laid siege to the fort on the same day.[1] The pressure of the Mughal forces made the situation critical for the defenders. Those who were against the petticoat rule did not feel the calamity to be serious or that if allowed to persist it will in due course ruin the fortunes of the Nizam Shahi kingdom. Such nobles were under the impression that after ousting Chand Bibi or compelling her to conclude peace the Mughals would return back. Hence they withdrew their hands and began to pursue their own course. This further weakened the position of Chand Bibi and the Nizam Shahi state. With fewer men and limited resources, how could the war be prosecuted on the two different fronts ? Ikhlas Khan, who had been earlier defeated and driven away by Mian Manjhu, returned and began to work against the interests of the Nizam Shahi state. He hastened to the fort of Daultabad, won over the garrison, entered the fort, proclaimed his protege Moti Shah as King and raised the banner of revolt.[2] Similarly, Abhang Khan moved towards Bijapur and arrived at Parenda, where he met Miran Shah Ali son of Burhan Nizam Shah I. With the intention of aggrandising his position Abhang Khan raised the canopy over the head of Miran Shah Ali, proclaiming him as king and thereafter with a large number of Abyssinians entered the fort of Bid.[3] From here he started settling the affairs of the Nizam Shahi country on his own without any authority from the Central Government. Mian Manjhu too did not lag behind in collecting wealth, recruiting soldiers and making himself sufficiently strong. After his arrival on the borders of the Adil Shahi kingdom, he

[1] *Burhan-i-Maasir*, p. 603.
[2] *Ferishta*, III, p. 299; *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 1046.
[3] Briggs has "Nihang Khan"; Ferishta III, p. 299.

opened negotiations with Ibrahim Adil Shah soliciting his assistance against the Mughals. In the hope of getting favourable reply and to watch the future developments in the affairs of the Nizam Shahi state, he stayed there along with his protege Ahmad. While the Mughals were busy in laying siege to the fort, ambitious nobles presented a spectacle of a house divided against itself.

To make the situation worse Ikhlas Khan advanced from Daultabad towards the capital with the object of wresting power from the hands of Chand Bibi and installing his own protege Moti Shah on the Nizam Shahi throne. He had planned to enter the fort by creating a diversion in the ranks of the enemy by his surprise attacks. But his progress was interrupted by the Mughal forces which inflicted a crushing defeat upon him near Paithan and compelled him to flee to Pattan.[1] His discomfiture offered some relief to Chand Bibi. Now to ensure united action against the Mughals, Chand Bibi turned to Abhang Khan. She sent confidential messengers to him, requesting him to come to terms with Mian Manjhu, join him and with the combined forces march towards Daultabad and by making a combined stand drive away the Mughals. Abhang Khan accepted the proposal, marched towards Daultabad where he was joined by Abyssinian nobles who had deserted Ikhlas Khan after his defeat and his refusal to abandon the cause of Moti Shah. This unexpected accession of strength to his fighting resources increased the confidence of Abhang Khan, who forced his way into the fort. He now made common cause with Chand Bibi and helped in standing the siege. Despite the fact that the Mughals were closely investing the fort and always vigilant Abhang Khan's men from outside continued to deliver surprise attack on them. At length his protege Shah Ali was driven away by the Mughals and compelled to take refuge in the fort of Bid.[2] Abhang Khan's success in entering the fort surprised Prince Murad, who from this time became more alert. He decided to press the siege further and capture the fort by laying mines in the walls of the fort. But his attempts proved to be futile and he failed to capture it. The gallant

[1] *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 1046.
[2] *Burhan-i-Maasir* (I.A. 1898) pp. 281-82.

resistance as offered by Chand Bibi, her firm determination and the support of Abhang Khaṇ countermined the plans of the Mughals. Outside the walls of the fort, Venkoji, a Koli chief took advantage of the jealousy and rivalry of Sadiq Muhammad Khan and Shah Baaz Khan and with the help of his light Maratha cavalry he seized their supplies and intercepted their line of communication by delivering surprise attacks upon them.[1]

Meanwhile Ikhlas Khan had joined Mian Manjhu who was busy in organising a grand coalition of the Deccani powers against the Mughals. This was a new development which alarmed the Prince. He thought that the grand coalition if it comes into shape, would certainly threaten the position of the Mughals at all points. Besides, he also noticed the scarcity of provisions in the Mughal camp caused by irregular movement of the convoys from Malwa and Gujarat and by the activities of the Deccanis. He was quite aware of the unfriendly relations of Sadiq Muhammad Khan and Shah Baaz Khan and between the latter and the Khan Khanan.[2] Nevertheless Prince Murad decided to deliver the attack on the fort. By this time Chand Bibi had completed her preparations with the active support of her ally Abhang Khan. The situation appeared to be tilting in favour of the Nizam Shahis. The increasing pressure of the Mughals led Ikhlas Khan and Mian Manjhu to act in close harmony. They collected round them six to seven thousand troops and moved to deliver surprise attacks on the Mughals. When Khan Khanan learnt of their rapid movements, he immediately sent Daulat Khan Lodi with 8000 well trained mounted archers from the army of Prince Murad, Shah Baaz Khan, as well as from his own army, to repel Ikhlas Khan and other *Habshi* amirs. A grim battle between the opposite forces took place on the banks of river Godavari, in which Ikhlas Khan was defeated and put to flight. Next day the Mughal soldiers moved like mad dogs pillaging and ravaging the towns of Pattan and Paithan and then returning to Ahmadnagar.[3] The activities of the Mughal soldiers caused greater scarcity of

[1] *Burhan-i-Maasir* (I.A. 1898) p. 282.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 284.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 285.

provisions in the Mughal camp, a situation which became difficult to overcome so easily. Defeat began to stare them in their very face. The news that Ibrahim Adil Shah and Quli Qutb Shah had agreed to extend all possible help to the Nizam Shahis shattered the nerves of the Mughals. At the same time their prolonged stay in the Deccan, their slow siege operations and their failure to reduce the strength of the besieged not only exhausted the patience of their generals but had also led them to think about the futility of continuing the war. In the war councils very often contradictory suggestions were put forward before the Prince. Thus unanimity of decision or concerted action was out of question. Moreover, the constant movements of the Mughal forces through his country proved to be unbearable to Raja Ali Khan. He too must have realised as to what would happen to his little state after the conquest of the fort of Ahmadnagar and the subjugation of the entire Nizam Shahi state. Despite the fact that he was twice transferred from one place to another he did not fail to extend his support secretly to Chand Bibi. He was pleased to see her valour, courage and capacity to offer uncompromising resistance to the Mughals. Thus every right thinking person came to the rescue of "lady moon", the cream of the age and a talented woman of many charms. The movement of provisions into the fort through the ranks of Raja Ali Khan improved the position of the garrison. Chand Bibi was now stronger than ever.

Prince Murad made determined efforts to storm the walls of the fort but could not succeed. The siege dragged on. The officers were alerted and instructed to be more vigilant and seal the possible routes leading to the fort. These new instructions and the change affected in the commands at the different positions, checked the smuggling of provisions into the fort. Formerly, there was scarcity of provisions outside, now it occurred inside. Both the parties longed for a respite. There was no way out than the conclusion of a truce. Instead of allowing the enemy to know about the exact position of the garrison and force her to open negotiations for peace, Chand Bibi forced Prince Murad to take the initiative in the matter. This she did by asking the commander of the allied forces of Bijapur and Golkunda to proceed immediately towards Ahmadnagar to help the garrison. The news of the movements of the

allied forces under the leadership of Suhail Khan and Quli Sultan Talash forced the Prince to open negotiations and conclude peace without wasting much time. The Mughals accepted Bahadur Nizam Shah as the ruler of the Nizam Shahi Kingdom, agreed to withdraw from the environs of Ahmadnagar on the condition that Berar be ceded to them (14th March 1596 A.D.).[1] These terms were more favourable to the Nizam Shahis than the Mughals, because the latter had to face tremendous difficulties in establishing military outposts in Berar.

After the Mughals had withdrawn from the environs of the fort of Ahmadnagar, the allied forces reached near Ahmadnagar. The situation appeared as tense as it was before the arrival of the Mughals. Finding the country free from the Mughal attacks, Chand Bibi asked the leader of the allied forces to withdraw. But the withdrawal of the allied forces did in no way ease the situation. The same set of leaders reappeared to press the claims of their respective proteges. Luckily, Abhang Khan, keeping in mind the interests of the Nizam Shahi kingdom decided to stand by Chand Bibi. He abandoned the claims of his protege Miran Shah Ali. But the self-seeking nobles like Ikhlas Khan and Mian Manjhu continued to press the claims of Ahmad Nizam Shah and Moti Shah. They were neither prepared to surrender their ambitious projects nor ready to abandon the claims of their proteges of doubtful parentage. Upon this Abhang Khan closed the gates of the fort on them, sent for Bahadur Nizam Shah who was residing in the fort of Jond to proclaim him king. With the active support and cooperation of Abhang Khan, Chand Bibi succeeded in proclaiming Bahadur Nizam Shah as king. A little later, she also succeeded in winning over Ikhlas Khan and persuading him to give up the claims of Moti Shah. Very successfully she turned Ikhlas Khan against Mian Manjhu and thereafter she asked her nephew Ibrahim Adil Shah to assist her in getting rid of Mian Manjhu.[2] Thus with his help, she suppressed the commotion created by

[1] *Burhan-i-Maasir* (I.A. 1898) p. 285, 291-94, *Ferishta* III, p. 201-3; Abul Fazl gives 23rd Feb. 1596 as the date of peace. See, *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 1048.

[2] *Ferishta*, III, p. 304.

Mian Manjhu and compelled him to say good-bye to the politics of Ahmadnagar and take refuge in the kingdom of Bijapur. By sheer dint of her merit, tact, foresight, diplomatic talents and pleasing manners Chand Bibi was able to liquidate successfully the influence of the two powerful nobles and compelled them to abandon the claims of their respective proteges. After peace had been restored and situation had been brought under control she appointed Muhammad Khan as *Peshwa* reposing all her trust and confidence in him. Hardly realising the value of it, Muhammad Khan began to shower favours on his own kith and kin, turning away the most competent persons from the administration. To this extent his dominance, was tolerated, but being puffed up with pride and the success he had achieved in exercising his power as appointing and dismissing authority, he laid his hands on Abhang Khan and Shamshir Khan whom he put under arrest. His actions and his behaviour towards these nobles who had shed their blood in saving the Nizam Shahi kingdom from collapse alarmed Chand Bibi who too became apprehensive of her own position. In all her helplessness she once more requested Ibrahim Adil Shah to intervene and help her in getting rid of this wily prime minister. Ibrahim Adil Shah immediately responded to the call, sent Suhail Khan with a large army to reset the cards at Ahmadnagar. Muhammad Khan refused to allow him to enter the fort. Upon this Suhail Khan laid siege to the fort. Now it was the turn of Muhammad Khan to seek the assistance of the Mughals against the Adil Shahi forces. He wrote to Khan Khanan to come and help him in driving away the Adil Shahis. His correspondence with the Mughal general Khan Khanan could not remain a secret and when it leaked out, his own supporters and the people began to look upon him with contempt. The noble queen succeeded in exploiting the situation in her favour by having Muhammad Khan imprisoned, appointing Abhang Khan to the office of Wakil and Peshwa and asking Suhail Khan to withdraw with his forces to Bijapur.

Instead of returning to Bijapur, Suhail Khan loitered in the Nizam Shahi country in the hope of finding some pretext to measure swords with the Mughal prince. Since long it had been his ambition to drive away the Mughals from the Deccan. His plans were supported by Abhang Khan, who was equally

anxious to recover Berar. But some plausible excuse was needed to resume the hostilities and open offensive. It was alleged that the Mughals had not observed the terms of the treaty by making unauthorised encroachments upon the Nizam Shahi country. Ibrahim Adil Shah and Qutb Shah too seeing the mind of the Mughals to stay in the Deccan, decided to pursue anti-Mughal policy and the two agreed to support the plans of Suhail Khan. As to the Mughals they had their own grievances against the Nizam Shahis. The Nizam Shahi nobles of Berar in accordance with the terms of the treaty should have vacated this region for the Mughals but instead of doing so, they began to contest for every inch of the ground. Persistently they offered resistance to the Mughals not enabling them to settle down peacefully.

Ultimately it was decided by the Mughals to measure strength in the field of battle, recover the lost ground and seize the unoccupied area. This decision was taken at a time when the Mughal position in the Deccan was quite weak. The entire Mughal camp was in a state of confusion. Shah Baaz Khan had left for Malwa without the permission of Prince Murad. Jealousy and rivalry was rampant every where; there was no agreement in the opinions of Prince Murad and his generals. And yet, it was decided to hold the ground and push the forces further. Without further wasting time, the Mughal forces advanced and fought a contested battle in the plain of Asthi[1] (8th Feb., 1597). Suhail Khan the leader of the allied forces was defeated. His forces fled in panic from the field. Thereafter, a large army was sent under Khan Khanan to capture the important forts of Berar. The Khan Khanan captured a large number of them and installed Mughal garrison in them. A little later, Prince Murad suggested him to cooperate with him in delivering a fresh attack on the fort of Ahmadnagar. But the Khan Khanan refused to accept the suggestion on the ground that the consolidation of the Mughal position in Berar was more necessary than any new conquest. This is how the differences between Prince Murad and Khan Khanan intensified. The death of Sadiq Muhammad Khan deprived the Prince of a

[1] *Ferishta*, III, p. 308; *Akbar Nama*, III, pp. 1070-2; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, p. 450; *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, Vol. II, p.468.

sincere adviser and an active supporter not only in the councils but also in the battlefield. Being fed up with the indifferent attitude of Khan Khanan, a little later, Prince Murad suggested the Emperor to recall him. Consequently, Khan Khanan was recalled to the court and Abul Fazl was appointed as commander-in-chief of the Mughal forces in the Deccan.[1] But this change did not bring any improvement in the Mughal position in the Deccan.

The weak position of the Mughals was a heaven-sent opportunity for the Nizam Shahis who were always keen to recover the lost ground. Slowly they recovered their losses. But owing to serious differences between Chand Bibi and Abhang Khan on administrative questions, those places which in the meanwhile had been seized from the hands of the Mughals were lost. The matter did not end here. The seizure of the entire administration by Abhang Khan and his hot temper not only made him unpopular amongst the nobles, but led Chand Bibi to turn him out of the fort and close the gates on him. She, however allowed him to transact the business of state from outside. Although an attempt was made by Ibrahim Adil Shah to affect reconciliation between the two but in vain. Chand Bibi now had no confidence in him. Firmly she acted and bluntly she refused to admit her enemy in the fort saying that she would prefer to be a slave of the Timurides rather than be a dependant of Abhang Khan.[2]

As regards Abhang Khan, his restless energy demanded a channel for its outflow. How could he sit idle ? In the absence of any Mughal general of repute and experience in the Deccan, Abhang Khan felt encouraged to resume the offensive against the Mughals. He tried to purchase loyalty of the Mughal soldiers but failed. Thereupon he made efforts to enter the fort of Ahmadnagar. He sent Ambar Chapu with his soldiers to force open the gates but Chand Bibi defeated and compelled the latter to withdraw. Having failed in his venture, Abhang Khan and Ambar Chapu decided to launch surprise attacks on the Mughals and harass them. Taking advantage of the absence of Khan Khanan and of the rainy season, when Godavari was

[1] *Ferishta*. III, pp. 309-10; *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 1103; 1111.
[2] *Burhan-i-Maasir* (I.A. 1898) p. 310.

not easily fordable, Abhang Khan sent a detachment to recover the town of Bir from the hands of the Mughals. Sher Khwaja, the Mughal commandant of the fort advanced 12 miles to oppose Abhang Khan's forces, but he was defeated and badly wounded. With great difficulty he managed to reach Bir. Shortly after Abhang Khan's forces arrived and laid siege to the fort. Finding it difficult to oppose the enemy single-handed, Sher Khwaja wrote express letters to the Emperor, apprising him of the situation and requesting him to send reinforcements immediately. Once more the Emperor pondered over the question of sending Khan Khanan again to the Deccan and recalling Abul Fazl to the court but before he could take final decision, disturbing news came from the Deccan. Meanwhile, without waiting for the reinforcements, Sher Khwaja again came out of the fort, fought a contested battle with the Deccanis but was again defeated. He again turned and shut himself in the fort. The arrival of Bahadur-al-Mulk in the nick of time, saved the situation. He along with his forces fell upon Abhang Khan's men, dispersed them and entered the fort of Bir. Using the fort as base, Bahadur-al-Mulk continued the fight against the Deccanis. When Abul Fazl came to know of the concentration of the Deccanis on the fort of Bir, he held a council to seek the advice of others on the question as to what should be done to relieve Sher Khwaja and Bahadur-al-Mulk. He found the Mughal generals divided in their opinions. Thereupon on his own he took the initiative, decided to advance with his forces towards Bir even though the rainy season was at its height. He made over the camp to Mirza Shah Rukh and Khwaja Abul Hasan and asked them to send the artillery and elephants to him at Jalnapur. He also sent for S. Abdur Rahman from Daultabad. He proposed to move towards the river Godavari, collect the troops in the way, then cross the river and relieve Bahadur-al-Mulk. In accordance with this plan he marched to Ahubara and encamped there. A little later, Mirza Yusuf Khan, and Mirza Ali Beg joined him with their forces. The latter was asked to guard the ford and fight the enemy. Although Abul Fazl tried to cross the inundated Godavari but could not get success until the arrival of S. Abdur Rahman. The latter crossed the river and compelled Abhang Khan's men to raise the siege and withdraw from Bir

to Ahmadnagar. In this manner although Abul Fazl succeeded in relieving Bahadur-al-Mulk, but shortly after he was called upon to face a series of regular surprise attacks of the Deccanis. While combating them, he experienced great hardships. He again decided to move towards the fort of Ahmadnagar but the dissensions amongst his officers prevented him and foiled his schemes of conquests. For sometime he remained encamped on the banks of Godavari. Here he decided to send S. Abdur Rahman to hold the fort of Bir. But on the receipt of a representation from Sher Khwaja to allow him to stay there, he had to change his mind.

In September 1599 Prince Daniyal was ordered to go to the Deccan to accomplish the task of subjugating the Nizam Shahi kingdom. Khan Khanan was asked to assist him. Abul Fazl, who had failed in his mission, at his own request was allowed to return to the court. But before his return to the north, the Mughals successfully captured the fort of Narnala in Berar. Until the arrival of Prince Daniyal and even after Abul Fazl continued to address himself to the task of pacifying the Deccanis. To a certain extent he had gained success in hounding out the enemy from some places but even then this success was neither stable nor complete. He was asked to reorganise the affairs of the Mughal forces operating in the Deccan and send back Prince Murad to the court who had failed to advance the Mughal interests in the Deccan and also to give a comprehensive report based on personal observation on the exact position of the imperialists there, and the attitude of the Deccani powers towards them.

Abul Fazl complied with these instructions of the Mughal Emperor. Although by this time the Mughals had captured the forts of Gawilgarh, Mehkar, Rahutara, Lohgarh, Kherla, Nasik etc. still the Mughals were in weak position to make a concerted attack on the fort of Ahmadnagar and capture it. He also noticed that Bahadur Khan, the successor of Raja Ali Khan and the ruler of Khandesh was reluctant to support the Mughal cause, and he was told that Prince Murad had taken to excessive drinking to forget the loss of his son Rustam. This is why in this interval no progress could be made by the imperial forces. As regards the Prince, before returning to the north, he in the hope of recovering his lost prestige, decided to make one more effort

to conquer the fort of Ahmadnagar. While on his way to Ahmadnagar, he breathed his last on 20th May 1599 near Dihrni on the banks of Purna, 40 miles from Daultabad.[1]

Abul Fazl alerted the Mughal officers, reorganised the Mughal forces and opened negotiations with Chand Bibi for an amicable settlement on the question of acceptance of the Mughal suzerainty. The latter being much distracted by the affairs of the capital formerly responded to the suggestion and showed an inclination to do so at the earliest. To bring about successful conclusion of his mission, Abul Fazl resolved to pay a visit to Ahmadnagar, but when he learnt that Prince Daniyal was coming to the Deccan to assume control of the affairs, he changed his mind.[2]

In one of his letters Abul Fazl requested the Mughal Emperor to come nearer to the scene of warfare, so that success could be gained smoothly. By this time the Mughal Emperor had become free from the affairs of the North-Western frontiers. Now he could safely turn his attention towards the affairs of the Deccan. To give his schemes a concrete shape, he started from the north, and arrived before the fort of Asirgarh. Since Bahadur Khan, the ruler of Khandesh had refused to accept the Mughal suzerainty, it was decided to lay siege to his fort, capture it and occupy the entire kingdom of Khandesh.[3] Besides, without removing Bahadur Khan from the side of the Nizam Shahis, it was rather difficult to gain success over the latter. Therefore, for the conquest of the Nizam Shahi kingdom it had become imperative for the Mughal Emperor to remove the buffer state of Khandesh from the political map.

The delay caused by the arrival of Prince Daniyal and the prolonged stay of the Mughal forces in Shah-garh and the news of the return of some of the Mughal officers to the north, whetted the ambitions of Abhang Khan. He brought out Shamshir-ul-Mulk son of Mian Khan, the former governor of Berar, from the prison and with a large army sent him towards Berar.

[1] *Ferishta*, III, p. 311; *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 1126. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Vol. II, pp. 391-92; *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* (R & B) Vol. I, p. 34.

[2] *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 1128; 1134; 1142; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, p. 465.

[3] *Ferishta*, III, p. 311; *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 1146; 1163; 1168; 1191.

Since some of the Mughal families were living in Berar, the news of Shamshir-ul-Mulk's departure caused great anxiety to Abul Fazl. The latter sent Muhammad Yusuf Khan with a large army to check his advance. But Yusuf Khan fell into the slumber of negligence and made no effort to drive away the enemy. Consequently, Shamshir-ul-Mulk entered Berar, stirred up great strife there. To control the situation Abul Fazl decided to proceed to Ahmadnagar. He collected a large army, fell upon the Deccanis and dispersed them and compelled them to take shelter near Ahmadnagar. In another battle the imperialists defeated Shamshir-ul-Mulk but the latter again managed to escape. He again turned back and laid his hands on Elichpur. The imperialists again defeated him and pursued him to a distance. A little later news arrived that Prince Daniyal had reached the borders of the Deccan. Upon this Abul Fazl abandoned the idea of proceeding to Ahmadnagar. From Shah-garh he came to Mungi Pattan. Here he decided to cross Godavari but before he did so he received explicit orders from the Prince to wait and stay there until his arrival.[1]

Early in the year 1600 A.D. the Mughal Emperor had opened the siege of the fort of Asirgarh, but it proved to be a long drawn out affair. While he stayed before the fort to supervise the operations, he sent a part of his army under Prince Daniyal and Khan Khanan to conquer the fort of Ahmadnagar. Thus once more the Mughal forces laid siege to the fort of Ahmadnagar.[2] By this time the position of the Nizam Shahi kingdom had become worse. Being offered better salary and lucrative posts a large number of Deccanis deserted the cause of the Nizam Shahis and joined the Mughal service. Add to this the party strife at the Nizam Shahi court, the serious differences between Chand Bibi and Abhang Khan on the question of acceptance of the Mughal suzerainty, the wavering nature and the shifting loyalties of the nobles, which minimised the possibilities of solid defence and effective resistance. Still, Chand Bibi rose equal to the occasion, showed remarkable courage, valour, determination in repelling the blows of the enemy. Very bravely she withstood the onslaughts of the enemy

[1] *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 1144.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 1157-8.

and to the last breath of her life she tried to save the honour of the Nizam Shahis. But the entire drama ended in a tragedy. Her murder killed the enthusiasm of her soldiers. The horror inside the fort presented a wild spectacle. While the blood was leaking from the wounded body of Chand Bibi, one of the walls of the fort was stormed by the Mughals. The latter rushed into the fort through the breach, fought the defenders, seized the fort, made Sultan Bahadur Nizam Shah captive and thereby brought down the power and prestige of the Nizam Shahi house, although the kingdom continued to exist for about four decades longer. No doubt that the city of Ahmadnagar lost its former glory, greatness, splendour and magnificence, the shattered walls of the fort and ramparts continued to remind the coming generations of the valour of that wonderful princess and the patriotism of those soldiers, who ungrudgingly laid their lives while defending the honour of their mother-land.

The conquest and the occupation of the fort of Ahmadnagar, the recovery of Berar by the Mughal forces, did not mean the total annihilation of the Nizam Shahi kingdom or its absorption into the Mughal empire. A large part of the kingdom was still in the hands of most powerful ambitious nobles, who not only wielded unlimited authority within their respective jurisdictions but had also decided to offer uncompromising resistance to the Mughals. Though there was no king, no unity, amongst them, no government and no person to command the situation, the Mughals who were superior to the Nizam Shahis in every respect could not gain the objective and immediately complete the work of conquest and subjugation.

In fact, it took almost forty years to complete the process of extinction of the Nizam Shahi kingdom. The imperialists continued to mobilise their forces, the more did they try to assert their position, the greater was the enthusiasm of the people to repel their attacks and preserve the local autonomy of the country. Urged by the feelings of local patriotism, the Marathas and the Muslims joined hands to stem the tide of Mughal aggression The ensuing struggle represents genuine desire on the part of the local population to maintain separate political entity of the Deccan. Equally keen were the invaders to extend the sphere of their authority to the Deccan.

The idea of offering organised resistance to the Mughal forces gained ground under the leadership of Malik Ambar, an Abyssinian adventurer. After the Mughals had given blow to the bleeding political structure of the Nizam Shahis and paralysed it, Malik Ambar's singular personality which bubbled with energy, vigour, vitality, and enthusiasm, fired by the patriotic feelings, gathered round his person, Marathas and Muslims, the Abyssinians and the Portuguese, bound them into one cord of human relationship forming them into an organic body. He trained them in the new method of warfare, infused in them a new spirit and arrayed them against the Mughals. The Maratha bands sent by him, became so active that the Mughals found it very difficult to hold the ground. Harassed by their surprise attacks, reduced to extremities by their tricks of hide and seek, the Mughals were forced to move from one square to another to save themselves and their lives. The success attained by his followers swelled his ranks, made his position strong and enabled him to play vital role in the politics of the Deccan. The history of next twenty six years of the Nizam Shahi kingdom, is a record of heroic achievements and the failures of one single individual, who rose equal to the occasion, fought valiantly against the internal and external forces, restored and revived the almost effete Nizam Shahi kingdom.

CHAPTER II

HIS EARLY LIFE

VERY little is known about the early life and career of Malik Ambar. He himself was not an autobiographer, like his contemporary, Emperor Jahangir, who could have written about his ancestors or early life etc. Nor was he a sovereign who could command a historian to applaud his actions and present a systematic account of his activities. But the scattered material in official and non-official histories of the period and the stray references in the diaries of the foreign travellers, does enable us to form a coherent picture of his childhood, youth and old age. Ambar Chapu, Ambar Jiu or Malik Ambar,[1] as he was commonly known in the Deccan, was born at Harar in Ethopia, in obscure Abyssinian family about the year 1549 A.D.[2] Like Qutbuddin Aibak, Iltutmish and Balban, who played heroic role on the political stage of northern India, Malik Ambar was too brought

[1] According to Dr. D.R. Seth, Malik Ambar's original name was Shambhu. Since Shambhu can never be the name of an Abyssinian and this name has not been mentioned by any historian, contemporary or later, we cannot accept this name—See his article "Life and Times of Malik Ambar," Islamic Culture, April, 1957, p. 142.

[2] *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, places the death of Malik Ambar at the age of eighty on 31st Urdubahisht, 1035. See, *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, p. 607; Khafi Khan mentions that his death occurred in 1036 A.H., See, *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, III, p. 376; Parmanand, the author of *Shiva Bharat* mentions 1548 Saka Era, as the date of his death, which also comes to 1035 A.H. Mirza Ibrahim Zubairi, the author of *Basatin-us-Salatin* also gives 1035 A.H. as the date of Malik Ambar's death—see, *Basatin-us-Salatin*, p. 274. Therefore it can be inferred that Malik Ambar must have been born about the year 1549 A.D. Also see, Ghulam Ahmad's article, "The rise and decline of the city of Aurangabad," Proceedings of the Deccan History Congress, 1945, p. 220.

by his poor parents and sold to Qazi-ul-Quzat of Mecca in the famous slave market of Baghdad and then to Khwaja Mir Baghdadi, commonly known as Mir Qasim, one of the famous merchants of that town. The Khwaja treated him like his own son with utmost generosity and kindness.[1] Malik Ambar's fortunes took a decisive turn after his generous patron brought him to the Deccan, which in those days was a land for venturesome. Here Malik Ambar was again sold to Mirak Dabir, styled as Changez Khan, one of the famous and influential nobles of Murtaza Nizam Shah I. Changez Khan had already a thousand slaves to maintain his position at the court, which was rent with party strife.[2] But according to *Tawarikh-i-Shivaji*, Malik Ambar came from Bijapur to Daultabad as *Faqir*. While he was sleeping in a shop on the roadside, with his legs raised, Sabaji Anant, then a very influential Nizam Shahi noble, happened to pass by that road. His eyes fell upon the sole's of Malik Ambar's feet. He noticed on them the marks of fortune and it occurred to him that either he was a great chieftain or a chieftain's son. He awakened him and took him to his house, honoured him and subsequently took him to the Begam of the Nizam Shah and procured for him the office of *Naib* of the kingdom.[3] The story is fascinating but it is devoid of sober facts. Who was this Sabaji Anant ? What was his position at the Nizam Shahi court ? When did he bring Malik Ambar to his house ? are questions which may agitate the mind of an enquirer. But there is no answer to these questions in other historical works. In other words, the facts supplied by the author of *Tawarikh-i-Shivaji* stand uncorroborated either by the contemporary or the later historians. The author being a Hindu, on the basis of the

[1] According to Dutch traveller Peter Van Den Broecke, Malik Ambar was a slave and was sold in Mocha for 20 *ductas*. See Journal of Indian History, 1932, p. 146; Islamic Culture, April, 1957, p. 142.

[2] *Futuhat-i-Adil Shahi* (British Museum MS) p. 267; For the Marathi translation of *Futuhat-i-Adil Shahi*, see Shiv Charita Vrita Sangraha, III, 1938-39; Islamic Culture, April 1957, p. 142; Epigraphica Indo-Moslemica, 1931, pp. 22-23.

[3] *Tawarikh-i-Shivaji* is a nameless work by an unknown author. It is a history of the rise and progress of the Maratha state to the death of Shivaji (1680 A.D.), written by a Hindu based on Maratha traditions. Whatever facts it has mentioned about Malik Ambar are neither reliable nor trustworthy. See, Modern Review, Vol. I, 1907, pp. 241-2.

Maratha traditions, has tried to give the credit to a Maratha for lifting Malik Ambar to such an important position. Against this, we are told that gradually he rose to power. Chivalrous as he was, within a short time Malik Ambar gained prominence among the other slaves of his master. Under the patronage of his wise and able benefactor who controlled the gear of Nizam Shahi politics and wielded much power and influence at the court, Malik Ambar being very close to him, got a chance to study the working of civil and military administration of the Nizam Shahi state. The untimely death of Changez Khan gave a rude shock to him, for it retarded the growth of his rising fortune and threw him into wilderness. The irreparable loss of an able master on the other hand led him to stand on his own legs. It must be said to the credit of Changez Khan that he had left a deep impression of his fine qualities on his favourite Malik Ambar. The latter joined the Nizam Shahi army as an ordinary soldier. In this capacity he got another opportunity to watch closely the dark clouds which were gathering on the political horizon of the Nizam Shahi kingdom.[1] He visualised from the close quarters the consequences of civil war and party strife and did not fail to understand that the worse days for the kingdom lay ahead. In a short time the very negation of all the ethical and moral principles in politics shook the pillars of the kingdom and let loose the disruptive forces which threatened the very existence of the state. The danger that lurked on the frontiers of the kingdom made confusion worse confounded in the political life of the Nizam Shahi capital. Fear and uncertainty moved as grim shadows round every individual. Under these circumstances Malik Ambar had to be content with a small salary which he drew by serving various masters in different capacities.

The arrival of the Mughal forces under Prince Murad, Khan Khanan and Shah Baaz Khan and others on the outskirts of the city of Ahmadnagar, created great confusion in the political life of the capital. There was no unity amongst the nobles, no single master to control the situation and not a single man to give sound advice on the internal and foreign policies. Every self-seeking, selfish man moved from one place to another either

[1] *Futuhat-i-Adil Shahi*, p. 262.

to safeguard his interests or to improve his fortunes by taking advantage of the chaotic state of affairs. Without any sympathiser or supporter, Malik Ambar had to live amidst such confusion for sometime, very often lamenting upon his bad luck. At last being disgusted and disappointed, he decided to leave for Golkunda in the hope of leading a peaceful life there. He then went to Bijapur, joined the Adil Shahi army, in which he held a minor rank. Being an Abyssinian he failed to get any recognition of his services. His surging ambitions brought him back to Ahmadnagar along with some other Abyssinians, who were coming to seek their fortunes in the troubled atmosphere there.

At this time too, the Nizam Shahi kingdom was a target to the deadly blows of the party strife, quarrel amongst the nobles and the scene of bitter contest for power. On the other hand the pressure of the Mughal forces was shaking the very foundations of the political fabric. Abhang Khan the leader of the Abyssinians, refused to recognise Bahadur Nizam Shah, a candidate of Chand Bibi as king. He was now in open rebellion. To strengthen his position and to press the claims of Miran Shah Ali, Abhang Khan invited his countrymen. Malik Ambar who was now at Ahmadnagar saw it a good chance, joined his standards and was made the commander of 150 horsemen. He served his new master with ability and intelligence. A little later when the Mughal forces again arrived at the invitation of his master, he withdrew to Junnar with him. It is difficult to say why Abhang Khan changed his mind and decided to offer resistance to the Mughals. In the formulation of new policy of offering opposition to the enemy there was the hand of Malik Ambar. However, during the siege of the fort of Ahmadnagar by the Mughals, Malik Ambar along with his master displayed much ability in cutting the line of communication and in disrupting his sources of supply. He seized their provisions and harassed them with their surprise night attacks. Again, when Abhang Khan came to terms with Chand Bibi and agreed to support her in expelling the Mughals, Malik Ambar in his company entered the fort, but during the confusion which followed on account of the high-handedness of Muhammad Khan and the arrest of Abhang Khan, Malik Ambar came out to collect large following in order to save his master.

He gathered round his person a large number of Abyssinians, Marathas and Muslims. He trained them in the new method of warfare and arrayed them against the Mughals. After the conclusion of peace he was left with no alternative than that of choosing altogether different line of action. He continued to hover round the imperialists and did not allow them to live in peace. After the death of Prince Murad, when Prince Daniyal took the field and opened the siege of the fort of Ahmadnagar, Malik Ambar again resumed his activities. Very often he would march to the borders of the Mughal empire carrying plunder and devastation into the hostile territory. His success in entering the Mughal dominions and in reducing the enemy to sorry plights enhanced his reputation as general. He compelled the robbers to give up their profession and enrol themselves in his army. Peter Van Den Broecke, in his diary mentions that after the death of his master Changiz Khan, "Malik Ambar won over his widow, who had but little property, because the king of the country seizes the property of great men, so that he had to turn to theft and robbery". Thus he obtained a large following and eventually he came to command 5000 men. He maintained himself like a robber in an impregnable place where the king of Ahmadnagar could do nothing to him for the fox was too cunning.[1]" Pietro Della Valle too refers to similar facts.[2]

The fall of the fort of Ahmadnagar created a favourable atmosphere for him to secure better obedience of the local population and strengthen his position in the face of the Mughal aggression. Since there was no king, no capital and the entire administrative machinery had gone out of gear, Malik Ambar decided to revive the fortunes of the fallen Nizam Shahi dynasty. He succeeded in discovering a scion of the Nizam Shahi family who was living at Parenda. He went to Parenda and requested Miran Shah Ali to allow his son Ali accept the crown and ascend the Nizam Shahi throne, since greater part of the Nizam Shahi country was held by the Nizam Shahi nobles. Being an old man of eighty, Miran Shah Ali saw sinister motives behind his ambitious schemes. Consequently,

[1] See, "Journal of Indian History," 1932, pp. 146-47.
[2] See, "*Travels of Pietro Della Valle*," Vol. II, pp. 144-46.

he refused to accept his proposal. Upon this Malik Ambar approached Ibrahim Adil Shah and requested him to exert some pressure upon Miran Shah Ali. At the same time he tried to inspire confidence in the old man by proposing to give his daughter in marriage to his son Ali. But Peter Van Den Broecke, the Dutch traveller gives a different version of this affair. He writes, "because the king was at war with the great Mughal who wanted himself to become the master of the whole of the Deccan, he summoned Malik Ambar and offered him to employ him on a good salary against the Mughals. The Malik refused this offer and persisted in his activities so that eventually he collected a force of over 5000 horse and gained many partisans. Seeing this, the King would forget the past and suggested that if the latter married his daughter and made her as Queen, he would always be his subject. The king with the approval of the counsellors agreed to the proposal, married Malik Ambar's daughter with great pomp and magnificence. Whereupon the Malik came to the court with 8000 well mounted horsemen, was cordially welcomed and provided with 4000 additional horsemen making 12000 in all and he rose to higher favour with the king." We cannot totally accept this version, but it appears that Shah Ali's son Ali, who was a young man, seeing Malik Ambar strong, might have approached him for assistance in reviving the fortunes of the fallen dynasty. Malik Ambar who was already in search of a scion of the Nizam Shahi house, would have readily responded to the suggestion put forward by Ali. And when the two agreed to assist each other in driving away the Mughals from the Deccan, Miran Shah Ali must have warned them of the serious consequences of coming into clash with the Mughals. Or failing in his attempt to persuade his son to give up his ambition of occupying the ancestral throne, Miran Shah Ali might have warned him against the *bona fides* of Malik Ambar. Ibrahim Adil Shah, who being convinced of the increasing Mughal pressure on the Deccan deemed it wise to persuade Shah Ali to repose confidence in Malik Ambar and permit his son Ali to marry his daughter to cement the mutual bonds of friendship. Consequently, Ali who was then at Bijapur, came to Parenda where the nuptials were celebrated with great pomp and magnificence. Thereafter Ali was raised to the

throne under the title, Murtaza Nizam Shah II (1600-1601 A.D.).[1]

The author of *Basatin-us-Salatin*, Mirza Ibrahim Zubairi mentions that Malik Ambar raised to the throne a person named Shah Ali. He writes :

یکی ازغلامان آن دولت‌خانه بودوکیاست درایت راباتهوروشجاعت
جمع داشت باراجو مذاکه اوهم ازین‌زمره بودوقلعه دولت‌آباد ورقبض
خویش داشت اتفاق کرده درحدراست ملک و حفاظت‌نام نظام شاهي
درآمده شمه آن‌ملک رادرضبط تصرف درآورده مرتضی نام‌شاه‌علی-
(p. 260-61)

But the author of *Maasir-i-Rahimi* states that Muhammad Husain, the son of Shah Quli Bahri was raised to the throne.[2] Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar has also committed an error by mentioning that one Nizam Shahi noble, "Set up Burhan Nizam Shah son of Prince Ali as king".[3] Thus different names of the man raised to the throne have been given by the contemporary, later and modern historians.

It has been earlier related that Miran Shah Ali had been selected by Abhang Khan and the latter by raising canopy over his head had proclaimed him king. But after coming to terms with Chand Bibi, Abhang Khan went to Daultabad and from there made a dash into the fort of Ahmadnagar in company of his protege's son Ali. As regards Shah Ali, he having failed to enter the fort was attacked and driven away by the imperialists. Since he had become victim of the ambitious designs of an Abyssinian and had been befooled once by him, he refused to trust another Abyssinian, Malik Ambar. Moreover, by 1600 A.D. he had become quite old and with one leg in the grave, certainly he had no ambition to sit on the throne. Taking into consideration these points, one can safely conclude that Miran

[1] *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 1173; *Ferishta* III, p. 164; *Futuhat-i-Adil Shahi* pp. 269-70; *Basatin-us-Salatin*, p. 261; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri* p. 268; *Maasir-ul-Umra*, Vol. II, pp. 534-5.

[2] *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, Vol. II, p. 511; Similarly Khafi Khan also has committed an error by mentioning that Shah Ali son of Burhan Nizam Shah I, was raised to the throne. See, *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, III, p. 264.

[3] *Sarkar*, "House of Shivaji", p. 34.

Shah Ali was not raised to the throne by Malik Ambar as stated by most of the historians. Nor was Burhan a son of Shah Ali, elevated to the throne in 1600 A.D. In fact, Burhan was the grandson of Shah Ali, not his son as, mentioned by Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar. In the Nizam Shahi family there was no person whose name was Muhammad Husain. Who was this Shah Quli Bahri ? Even this name is not found anywhere except in *Maasir-i-Rahimi*. Even if accept that Miran Shah Ali and Shah Quli Bahri were one and the same person, there arises the difficulty of accepting Muhammad Husain as the son of Miran Shah Ali.

Abul Fazl has correctly mentioned that Ali, son of Shah Ali was raised to the throne. His version should be accepted for more than one reason. Abul Fazl as we know lived in the Deccan up to the year 1602 A.D. During this period he not only witnessed the fall of the fort of Ahmadnagar, occupation of Berar by the Mughal forces but himself led the Mughal forces either against Malik Ambar or Raju Deccani. At this period he must have also come to know of the accession of Ali to the throne. Since he had the first hand information, his version of the events should be regarded as more authentic than Mirza Ibrahim Zubairi, who wrote two centuries later. Baqi Nahawandi was wrongly informed that Muhammad Husain the son of Shah Quli Bahri was raised to the throne. Besides, Malik Ambar would have neither preferred an old man on the throne nor would he have liked to give his daughter in marriage to him. Then there is the statement of Peter Van Den Broecke who clearly states that Malik Ambar had given his daughter to that Prince and whom, "he serves with loyalty". On the basis of these arguments and the statements of Abul Fazl and Peter Van Den Broecke, it can safely be asserted that Ali son of Shah Ali was raised to the throne.

Malik Ambar became the prime minister or *Wakil-ut-Saltanat* of the Nizam Shahi kingdom. Parenda was made the temporary capital of the Nizam Shahis. Thus in a short time by sheer dint of his ability, experience and courage Malik Ambar reestablished the administration, restored law and order in those parts of the country over which he wielded influence. Now since there was a king and a capital with an able prime minister, conditions were bound to return to normalcy. The masses and

the classes feared Malik Ambar, lived in peace and began to look forward for better days.[1]

While Malik Ambar was busy in consolidating his position in the southern parts of the kingdom, his future rival Raju Deccani constantly strived to strengthen his position in the north-eastern parts of the Nizam Shahi country by delivering surprise attacks on the Mughals. Raju Deccani or Raju Paulad was the adopted son of Munna Deccani a *Mahaldar* of Saadat Khan, the Hindu minister of Burhan Nizam Shah II.[2] After the death of his father, Raju succeeded to the post held by his father. In a short time he became the chief of all *Mahaldars*. Being an influential figure, he was promoted to the office of *Wakil-ut-Saltanat* and *Madr-ul-Maham*.[3] After the death of Burhan Nizam Shah II, when there was political chaos in the Nizam Shahi kingdom and disruptive forces were in full swing, Raju Deccani too, like Malik Ambar, along with his master Saadat Khan, moved to the hilly tracts, looking forward for an opportunity to improve his prospects. During the siege of the fort of Ahmadnagar by Prince Daniyal, Saadat Khan and Haibat Khan harassed the Mughals by their surprise attacks. Raju must have helped his master in those difficult enterprises.[4] This certainly gave Raju a good opportunity to understand the technique of fighting and dealing with the Mughals. A little later Saadat Khan with about 3000 men tried to enter the fort by crossing the lines of Khan Khanan but Chand Bibi refused to admit him. Thereupon he returned to his *jagirs* in Nasik and *Trimbak*.[5] Seeing him in a desperate condition his followers deserted him and joined the Mughal service.[6] Saadat Khan fearing that his entire estate would be seized by the Mughals decided to join them. He handed over a slice of his jagir to Raju and went over to Khan Khanan. Thus the entire territory

[1] *Futuhat-i-Adil Shahi*, pp. 269-70; *Basatin-us-Salatin* p. 261; *Ferishta*, II, p. 164; *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 1172; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, p. 468; *Maasir-ul-Umra*, I, pp. 534-5; Oriental Biographical Dictionary, p. 283.

[2] *Futuhat-i-Adil Shahi* p. 268; *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, II, p. 501.

[3] *Ibid*.

[4] *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, II, pp. 501-2.

[5] *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 1047; *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, II, p. 502.

[6] *Ibid*.

lying between Nasik and Trimbak easily passed into the hands of the Mughals. This no doubt strengthened the position of the Mughals in the Nizam Shahi country but the activities of Raju Deccani, a true son of the soil, compelled the Mughal officers to retrace their steps. While recovering every bit of territory from the hands of the Mughals Raju showed exemplary courage and devotion to the land of his birth. After sometime Saadat Khan requested Prince Daniyal to allow him to recover the lost territories and conquer fresh lands adjacent to his former jagirs, which were now in the possession of the Nizam Shahi nobles. His request was granted but when he moved in company of the Mughal forces in that direction, to his surprise he was opposed by the same Raju whom he had entrusted the task of looking after the affairs of his estates.

Just after the departure of Saadat Khan towards the Mughal camp Raju had been persuaded by Abhang Khan to seize the territories of his master and strive to keep the Mughals at a distance. The idea of offering resistance to the Mughals also appealed to his mind. He agreed to perform this duty. In return Abhang Khan promised to elevate him to the rank of *amir* at the Nizam Shahi court. Abhang Khan told him, "that the reward of fidelity to the salt is greatness." Guard carefully the territory and the forts in your possession and try to increase them. Being allured by the prospects of receiving the favours at the Nizam Shahi court, Raju soon assembled an army of 8000 horsemen and began to harass the Mughals by his surprise attacks. The Mughals were thus thrown on the defensive. Not only this, he also compelled Saadat Khan and Fathullah to withdraw their forces and retreat in disorder. In this way Abhang Khan turned the forces of Malik Ambar and Raju Deccani against the Mughals. The Deccanis and the Abyssinians now rose equal to the occasion to sustain and repel the blows of the mighty imperial power of the north and check its forward movement.

After the fall of the fort of Ahmadnagar, when confusion and chaos engulfed the entire kingdom, Raju waited and watched the situation. But never did he sit silently at his oars or to allow the grass grow under his feet. He saw in Malik Ambar his future rival so far as the contest for the office of *Wakil* and *Peshwa* of the Nizam Shahi kingdom was concerned.

Despite the differences between Raju and Malik Ambar, the aims, objects and the ambitions of the two were the same. Since the time was opportune to settle their mutual difference Raju endeavoured for a compromise with his rival. After securing a promise for safe conduct from Malik Ambar he arrived at the Nizam Shahi court to pay his respects to Sultan Murtaza Nizam Shah II, and to join his service. On this occasion he presented an elephant, 12 Turki horses and 4000 *huns* to the Sultan as present. Thereafter he was taken into service and was appointed as *Khawas* with the duty of standing behind the throne with a handkerchief in his hand. He had come here with high expectations. The post which was given to him neither suited his temperament nor satisfied his lust for power. How could a soldier, whose hobby was to strive, live, survive amidst the clash of swords, feel happy as *Khawas* or attendant ? His energy and enthusiasm to display his talents in the battlefield, diplomacy and politics, incited him to leave the court and return to his *jagirs*. But upon his arrival there he found that his own men had turned against him. This he had never expected. Again he returned to the court in the hope of preparing the ground for himself. He won over some of the supporters of Malik Ambar, poisoned the ears of young Murtaza Nizam Shah II that Malik Ambar was instigating his soldiers against him with the malicious intentions, whatever they might be. The change in Murtaza's attitude gave a clear indication to Malik Ambar that behind this misunderstanding there was the hand of Raju. He thought it prudent to nip the danger in the bud. Therefore, Malik Ambar marched towards his jagirs with a large army, won over his men and occupied a large number of forts and fortresses. This was bitterly resented by Raju Deccani, who sought the assistance of Murtaza Nizam Shah to gain an upper hand of his rival. With a large army he marched towards his jagirs to recover them, but having failed in his attempts to attain his objectives he returned to the Nizam Shahi court. No sooner did he reach there than Malik Ambar had him arrested and imprisoned him. But the latter managed to effect his escape. Again he returned to his jagirs, solicited the support of Malik Ambar's enemies, converted his own enemies into friends and drove away Malik Ambar's men and recovered his lost *jagirs*. He now threw an open challenge

to Malik Ambar.[1] The contest for power entered another phase.

At very early stage Malik Ambar was able to read Raju's mind. He had become apprehensive of his plans and of ambitious designs. In full appreciation of the situation, he decided to follow a different line of action with a view to crush Raju's opposition. Not only was Raju hostile to him but even the rulers of Bijapur and Golkunda were bidding their time to swallow the remnants of the Nizam Shahi kingdom. They thought that the Mughal sovereign had become quite old and thus may not pursue an expansionist policy and so they were free to do as they liked. Malik Ambar had rightly concluded that no assistance would come to him from their side. Hence he decided to join the Mughals.

The interests of the Mughals in the Deccan demanded that they should have an alliance with Malik Ambar. The Khan Khanan wished to exploit his friendship by giving a crushing blow to Raju with his assistance. Consequently, he developed a liking for him and extended a kindly hand towards him. Malik Ambar who was in search of such an ally feeling satisfied with the overtures of the Mughal commander came to Abul Fazl offering to be enrolled in the Mughal service. As Raja Harbans expressed doubts regarding his future fidelity, Malik Ambar was not taken into imperial service. The latter had to return disappointed.[1]

Upon his return from Mughal camp, Malik Ambar again found himself in a perilous situation. Raju had become more active in the north eastern regions of the Nizam Shahi state. Nor could he trust his own master Sultan Murtaza Nizam Shah II, whom he had raised to an unrivalled position. Taking advantage of the internecine struggle between Raju and Malik Ambar and their mutual rivalry Prince Daniyal decided to attack both of them. He again appointed Khwajgi Fathullah to recover the *jagirs* of Saadat Khan from the hands of Raju Deccani. Daulat Khan was sent towards Nasik to assist him. He attacked the fort of Nasik, captured it along with some other forts of that region. A little later Khwajgi Fathullah also moved towards Nasik to deliver surprise attack upon Raju

[1] *Futuhat-i-Adil Shahi*, p. 270.

Deccani. Upon his arrival near Nasik, his men deserted him and went over to the enemy. The latter seized the opportunity, attacked the Mughals from different directions, took them by surprise and seized the country from Daultabad to Jalnapur. To check his further advance Prince Daniyal sent Abul Fazl, who uptil now was busy in dealing with Malik Ambar. Abul Fazl immediately hastened in that direction to punish him. He pitched his camp at Hasanabad and thereafter leaving behind Mir Murtaza, Wafadar Khan, and Mir Hazar to protect the Mughal dominions against the intrusions of Malik Ambar and to keep an eye on Murtaza Nizam Shah II, himself with a large army marched to deal with Raju Deccani. He came to Ahubara and pitched his camp there. Upon his approach Raju fell back and entire country including Jalnapur was reoccupied by the imperial forces.[1] After this, Abul Fazl came to Daultabad where he learnt that Raju Deccani had become active again in the north eastern parts of the Mughal dominions in the Deccan. Consequently he forthwith left the place and hotly pursued the enemy as far as the tank of Qutlu. Raju again managed to escape to Nasik. Now Abul Fazl decided to attack him openly but was dissuaded by his followers.[2] This gave an opportunity to Raju to extend the sphere of his influence by passing through Daultabad, plundering and looting Satara and other places and harassing the Mughals. His activities and swift movements compelled Abul Fazl to descend the hills and overtake him near Cotwara. Raju appeared with a large army, fought a indecisive battle with the Mughals and then withdrew. During this skirmish he lost many of his good soldiers. To compensate the losses he withdrew to the fort of Daultabad and stayed there for sometime. After collecting his men he reappeared before the Mughals but was again put to flight by the latter.[3] He was not the man to sit quietly. A little later he again appeared and delivered a series of surprise attacks on the Mughals, not giving them any opportunity to collect the provisions or to consolidate their position. He intensified his activities near Nasik and Daultabad, where he seized the

[1] *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 1190.
[2] *Ibid*., p. 1193.
[3] *Ibid*., p. 1195.

supplies of the enemy, made captive some of their men and ultimately compelled them to withdraw from certain outposts. Abul Fazl once more came out with Mirza Ali Beg Akbar Shahi, Qasim Khwaja, M. Zahid and others, engaged Raju in an open battle and defeated him with heavy losses. On this occasion Raju lost nearly 5000 men, many of them being made captive by the Mughals.[1] The news of Malik Ambar's advance towards Telingana compelled Abul Fazl to move towards that region in order to help Khan Khanan. It is true that during this period on account of the superiority of their resources, the Mughals gained many successes over Raju but the later despite his slender resources never failed to check their further advance. The loss of substantial number of horses, the main prop of his strength no doubt drove him into wilderness for a while but he never missed the opportunity of harassing the Mughals.

While Abul Fazl was dealing with Raju Deccani Malik Ambar entered Telingana, defeated Bahadur Gilani, the Mughal commandant who had been left there with a small contingent.[2] This surprise attack of Malik Ambar compelled Abul Fazl to hasten from Jalnapur to the threatened zone. Malik Ambar withdrew but reappeared before the fort of Ahmadnagar. The rapidity of his movements made the Mughals so nervous that Ali Mardan Bahadur marched with large army from Telingana to relieve Sher Khwaja, the commandant of the fort of Ahmadnagar. But at Pathri he was defeated by Malik Ambar's men and was made captive by them.[3] The news of the defeat of the Mughal forces and the seizure of Ali Mardan Khan and the astonishing success of Malik Ambar in driving away the Mughal officers from the regions round about the fort of Ahmadnagar, compelled the Khan Khanan to send another force against him. The Khan Khanan now gave instructions to Abdur Rahman, the son of Abul Fazl to leave Berar with a large army, attack Malik Ambar on the borders of Telingana and seize the territory which

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 1189; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, pp. 475-76.

[2] *Akbar Nama*, III, pp. 1173, 1175, 1178, 1180, 1181, *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, pp. 475-6.

[3] *Ibid.*

he had recently occupied. Abdur Rahman proceeded towards Telingana to deal with Malik Ambar.[1]

Malik Ambar appointed Farhad Khan to lead the combined forces of the Abyssinians and Deccanis to oppose the Mughal advance. He himself with another party, crossed the Godavari near Nander. He continued his march until he had reached the banks of river Manjhara, where he encamped. From the other side S. Abdur Rahman advanced to deliver a two pronged attack on him. In the way he was joined by Sher Khwaja. Thus the combined forces of the Mughals moved to fight Malik Ambar. Before opening the offensive, the Mughal forces encamped opposite to Malik Ambar's camp. A little later, the rival forces took up their different positions and prepared themselves for a bitter conflict. As regards Malik Ambar he was always ready to measure swords with the Mughals in open field. Since long he had been nursing such an ambition in his heart. He commanded the centre of his army, while the left and the right wings were entrusted to Mansur Khan Habshi and Farhad Khan. The battle started in the afternoon of Sunday 16th May 1601 A.D. The contest was very serious. The imperialists came out victorious. The total amount of the losses sustained by Malik Ambar was great. He lost four hundred men besides those who were wounded.[2]

The defeat of Malik Ambar in the battle of Nander must have offered an interval of relief to Raju Deccani. He must have realised that his position was secure in the north-eastern parts of the Nizam Shahi state. But he was disillusioned to find himself face to face with the Mughals, who after settling their accounts with Malik Ambar also turned to deal with him. On May 29th 1601 A.D. the Mughals occupied the fort of Trimbak and Galna. Their success over his rival and in conquering the forementioned forts, threatened his position. But he would give no respite to them to breathe a sigh of relief. He reappeared before them, enticed them, moved through Daultabad plundering and devastating the places through which he passed. Abul Fazl pursued him, overtook him, defeated him

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] *Akbar Nama*, III, pp. 1185, 1186, 1189, 1190, 1195, 1200; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, p. 477.

and put him to flight. Again he collected resources and forces, reappeared before the Mughals to plunder their camp equipage, but again he was put to flight.

After the battle of Nander, Malik Ambar made ceaseless efforts to recoup the losses. He reorganised his forces and then moved towards Telingana, with seven to eight thousand horsemen to recover it.[1] Near Manjhna, he delivered a surprise attack on the Mughal forces under Hamid Khan, Baaz Bahadur and Bahadur-ul-Mulk. He defeated them and put them to flight. So badly had he scattered the imperialists, that it was with great difficulty that Bahadur-ul-Mulk could cross the river and effect his escape. Hamid Khan and Baaz Bahadur were made captives. The defeat of the imperialists enabled Malik Ambar to recover the fertile tracts of Telingana.[2] Now he sent Farhad Khan with a contingent of troops against Sher Khwaja to wrest the fort of Ahmadnagar. Farhad Khan surrounded the fort and compelled the Khan Khanan, who was inside the fort to come out and summon Abul Fazl for help. The news of the forward movements of Abul Fazl, led Farhad Khan to retrace his steps and deliver few night attacks on the pursuing forces.[3]

By this time Malik Ambar had completed his task of consolidation in Telingana. Feeling confident of his resources and strength, Malik Ambar entered the hilly region of Ausa and from there marched towards Bidar. The governor of Bidar, Malik Barid sent his forces against him. Ibrahim Khan the commander of the Bijapuri forces was defeated and put to death. The victorious Malik Ambar seized 14 elephants on this occasion.[4] Then he turned against the Qutab Shah, the ruler of Golkunda, with a view to strike terror into his heart. Incidentally it may be mentioned here that both Ibrahim Adil Shah and Quli Qutb Shah at this juncture were pursuing the policy of splendid isolation. None of them was interested in the success or the failure of either Raju Deccani or Malik Ambar against the Mughals. They did not like to interfere either with

[1] *Akbar Nama*, III, pp. 1193-4.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 1194; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, p. 478.
[3] *Akbar Nama*, III, pp. 1195, 1197.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 1209.

the affairs of the Mughals in the Deccan or in the wars which Malik Ambar was waging against the Mughals. But the pressure of the Mughals on the Nizam Shahi kingdom had made it clear that no state in the Deccan could remain in isolation or pursue an isolationist policy for, in the long it would be suicidal to its interests. So he wanted to open the eyes of the Deccani rulers. With this object in view as also with the intention of defining the boundaries of the Nizam Shahi state, he first turned against Bijapur and then against the kingdom of Golkunda. He marched towards Naubilas, defeated the Qutb Shahi forces, compelled them to surrender a few elephants and to pay large amount in cash. Thereafter, he returned to Telingana. He then led expeditions against the Mughals in Berar and took possession of some of the districts and *parganas*. Since his position had become quite strong in Telingana and Berar, Malik Barid thought it prudent to purchase peace by sending money and costly presents.[1]

While Malik Ambar was busy in fighting the Adil Shahi and Qutb Shahi forces, Prince Daniyal, again sent Khawajgi Fathullah against Raju Deccani, but he returned without getting any success against him. Upon this, the Prince again sent him along with Saadat Khan, Fulad Khan and Malik Sher and other fief holders of Khandesh and Nadarbar to deliver attacks on Raju and compel him to leave the north eastern parts of the Nizam Shahi state. Khwajgi Fathullah marched with his forces, arrived at Babil and pitched his camp here. Raju too advanced, fought a contested battle with the Mughals, defeated them and compelled them to take shelter in the fort of Sungar. He pursued them closely, and laid siege to the fort of Sungar. Not being able to capture it, Raju left the fort and laid his hands upon the family of his master Saadat Khan, which was then living at Pathri. Thereafter, he again returned to attack the fort of Sungar, but the arrival of Azmat Khan along with soldiers from Baglana, of Inyatullah from Burhanpur and the return of Abul Fazl from Telingana, compelled Raju to raise the siege of the fort and return to Daultabad. On his way he captured the fort of Galna.[2]

[1] *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 1209, *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, p. 478.
[2] *Akbar Nama*, III, pp. 1196-97.

It is quite surprising that even with vast resources of Malwa Gujarat, Khandesh, and Berar at their disposal, the Mughals failed in their efforts to curb the rising power of Raju in the northern tracts and of Malik Ambar in the southern regions of the Nizam Shahi Deccan. Since there was no understanding between Raju and Malik Ambar or any contacts of the two with the rulers of Bijapur and Golkunda, the task was an easy one. Yet, the Mughal generals failed perhaps owing to inexperience of Prince Daniyal as commander or because of mutual jealousy amongst the Mughal generals posted in the Deccan. Besides, the strained relations between the Emperor and Prince Salim, especially between 1602-3 A.D. had also a very unwholesome effect on the mind of the Mughal nobles in the Deccan. Moreover, the Mughal soldiers considered the Mughal wars in the Deccan as futile and purposeless. They were accustomed to fight pitched battles in open wide plains throughout the year except during the rainy season. But in the Deccan they had to bear the cruelties of nature, the shocks of surprise attacks in the night and had to march through dense forests and the muddy roads and deep valleys. All this aggravated their miseries and spread despondency among them. The Prince was not unaware of the feelings of his nobles and soldiers, which placed him in an uncomfortable position. He therefore, decided upon another plan, for dealing with Raju and Malik Ambar. He divided the Mughal possessions in the Deccan into two provinces of equal size, appointed the Khan Khanan to hold Berar, Pathri, and Telingana and deal with Malik Ambar. While Abul Fazl was appointed to hold Ahmadnagar and from there curb the activities of Raju and other Nizam Shahi nobles.[1] In this manner the two Mughal commanders were to act under the personal supervision of Prince Daniyal. The success of the plan depended upon the close collaboration between Abul Fazl and the Khan Khanan and the active vigilance of Prince Daniyal. But from the very beginning they were conspicuous by their absence.

Malik Ambar sent Farhad Khan to deliver a night attack on Sher Khwaja and capture the fort of Pathri. Upon this Abul Fazl left Daultabad, came and joined Khan Khanan at Parnur. From

[1] *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 1199.

this place the combined forces of Abul Fazl and Khan Khanan proceeded to meet Farhad Khan. On the banks of Godavari a serious battle took place between the opposite forces in which the Deccanis under Farhad Khan were defeated. Abul Fazl immediately left Bareli, traversed the hills and took refuge in the fort of Amba Coka, to further watch the activities of the Deccanis and complete the preparations for meeting other attacks. From here he made efforts for a forward movement. He divided his forces placing each wing under the command of Muhammad Zahid, Bahadur-ul-Mulk and Sher Khwaja, and then crossed the passes and dispersed the enemy after a fight. The same night news arrived that Murtaza Nizam Shah II had left the fort of Dharwar and had taken refuge at Ausa. Consequently, imperial van under Sher Khwaja marched towards Ausa to lay siege to the fort and compel the Nizam Shah to submit. The approach of the Mughal forces unnerved Murtaza Nizam Shah and Malik Ambar. Not fully prepared to face the enemy in the battlefield, Murtaza Nizam Shah decided to conclude peace with the Mughals. He sent apologetic letters to Abul Fazl and opened negotiations for peace with Prince Daniyal, and succeeded in concluding peace with the Mughals.[1] The terms of the treaty were worse than the defeat itself. Malik Ambar was called upon to relinquish his position from the northern part of the Nizam Shahi state, release the Mughal prisoners like Baaz Bahadur, Ali Mardan Bahadur and Hazaara Beg and that the Nizam Shah must accept the suzerainty of the Mughals. In return the Nizam Shah was confirmed in possession of the *Sarkars* of Ausa, Dharwar and Bir. (3rd Jan, 1602 A.D.) In this manner Malik Ambar was forced to remain in the southern parts of the Nizam Shahi country.[2]

After the conclusion of the peace imperial officers withdrew once more to make arrangements for recovering Telingana from the hands of Malik Ambar. Mir Murtaza was appointed for the foresaid purpose. Bahadur-ul-Mulk, Rustam Arab, Shamsher Arab, Burhan-al-Mulk and others were ordered to accompany him. Likewise in accordance with another plan, Khan Khanan was asked to establish headquarters at Parnur, and supervise

[1] *Akbar Nama*, III, pp. 1198-99.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 1199.

the Mughal operations in Telingana and defend Pathri from the attacks of Malik Ambar. Similarly, Abul Fazl was sent towards Nasik to punish Raju Deccani. M. Rustam, Raja Suraj Singh, and Muquim Khan and others were sent to assist him. (15th Feb, 1602 A.D.).

The Khan Khanan who had already differences with Prince Daniyal and Abul Fazl and was a partisan of Prince Salim, never wished that his adversaries should get the credit for success in the Deccan. Nevertheless, he sent his son Mirza Irij with 5000 horses against Malik Ambar.[1] While these new arrangements were taking shape, Malik Ambar came out in open, reduced Mir Murtaza and Sher Khwaja at Jhari to a state of utter helplessness. Upon the approach of Mirza Irij with a large army, Malik Ambar withdrew. Mirza Irij without any difficulty joined Mir Murtaza and Sher Khwaja and planned to attack Malik Ambar. On hearing the advance of the combined forces of the three Mughal generals, Malik Ambar again retreated to Damtaur and from there proceeded towards Qandhar and then he suddenly took a turn and moved towards Nander. While on the way to Nander he was joined by Farhad Khan with three thousand troops. Imperialists hotly pursued him, overtook him near Nander, defeated and put him to flight, dispersing his forces in various directions. In the action Malik Ambar was wounded. Had not his followers carried him away from the battlefield to a safe place, he would have certainly fallen into the hands of the enemy.[2]

This defeat no doubt shook his nerves but in no case his confidence. It unmistakably pointed out the various causes of his failure. Firstly, it was due to proper disposition of the Mughal army under the two separate commanders and their combined tactics against him. Secondly, it was the direct result of his rivalry with Raju, of which the Khan Khanan took the fullest advantage on this occasion. Yet he did'nt lose courage. He continued to harass the Mughals whenever they tried to enter the Nizam Shahi territory, which was now fairly

[1] *Ferishta* III, pp. 315-6; *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 1212; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, p. 484.

[2] *Ibid.*

extensive. He enjoyed popularity and influence in the region extending from the borders of Telingana to within few miles of Bir and Ahmadnagar and forty miles west of Daultabad to Chaul on the western coast.

Nor did the Mughal attacks under the leadership of Abul Fazl dump the spirit of Raju Deccani, who had proved to be troublesome to the enemy in the area lying between Daultabad and few miles of Ahmadnagar and to the frontiers of Gujarat. He was not the man to give up his ambitions or abandon his activities, for his very existence depended upon them. Though a serious rival of Malik Ambar his incessant activities against the Mughals redounded to the advantage of the former. Thus hostility between Malik Ambar and Raju Deccani had both its advantages and disadvantages. It also prevented the imperialists to concentrate their attention on a single point, against the single enemy giving the other the opportunity to recover the losses.[1]

With only half of the resources of the Nizam Shahi Kingdom at his command Malik Ambar found it difficult to reduce the Mughal pressure on it. He realised that he was surrounded by many difficulties and it was not so easy for him to play the role of the saviour of the fallen Nizam Shahi dynasty or protect the Nizam Shahi kingdom. Raju's hostile conduct, the fear of his attack on Nizam Shahi kingdom, and the suspicion that at any moment he might enter into alliance with the Nizam Shah or the Mughals to oust him, always placed him in alarming situation. Internally, the country had not yet recovered from the after-effects of the Mughal campaigns. Added to this the presence of a group of discontented Deccani nobles who had been completely demoralised by the military superiority of the Mughal generals. Their loyalty had been corrupted by the lavish distribution of gold by the Mughals. Common people having been completely fed up with continuous warfare had little interest in protecting the freedom of the country or in saving Nizam Shahi dynasty. Desertions occurred on large scale. Some joined the Mughal service in the hope of improving their fortunes, while others were tired of miseries of mal-administration, devastation of the standing crops and insecurity of life

[1] *Ferishta* III, p. 315.

and property. The uncertain political and economic conditions compelled the vast bulk of population either to leave the Nizam Shahi kingdom and take refuge in the neighbouring kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkunda or to go to the north. The soaring prices of the essential commodities and the downward trends in production, consequent upon the closure of many indigenous industries owing to the constant mobilisation of forces had killed the sense of local patriotism and the enthusiasm to defend the country. Herculian efforts were needed to reinculcate the patriotic sense amongst the people and inspire confidence in them. This was rendered all the more difficult because of the division in the Abyssinian community itself. It presented a picture of a house divided against itself. Those who had small following and little territory under them began to dream of carving independent principalities. Precisely for this reason the civil administration of the country had gone to pieces and the military organisation had also been completely shattered.

The external situation was no better. Both the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkunda, realising that the Mughal pressure was gradually increasing and that they were determined to stay in the Deccan, purchased peace by offering them valuable presents and sending envoys to the imperial court. Since the rulers of the neighbouring kingdoms were interested in the fall of Nizam Shahi kingdom, how could they extend cooperation to Malik Ambar ? They looked upon him as merely military adventurer and self-seeking ambitious noble. They did not trust him. Hence Malik Ambar had to establish his *bonafides* and convince them of his worth and his earnestness in his support of the cause of the fallen Nizam Shahi family.

To overcome the external and internal difficulties, Malik Ambar once more decided to deal with Raju Deccani with cautious diplomacy. The repeated attacks of the Mughals and his growing hatred towards them compelled Raju to be on terms with his rival Malik Ambar. Despite their dislike for each other, it was patent to them that they were striving after the same objective i.e. expulsion of the Mughals from the Deccan and the restoration of the Nizam Shahi kingdom. Both of them were devoted to the Nizam Shahi house. They professed allegiance to and served Murtaza Nizam Shah III. By common consent they had agreed to give the fort of Ausa for his

residence and the revenue of few adjacent villages for his maintenance. They were equally keen to avert the Mughal encroachments and prevent the total annihilation of the Nizam Shahi kingdom. They harassed the invaders by seizing their convoy of provisions, cutting off their line of communication and raiding their territories. But in spite of the community of objectives the gulf between the two could not be bridged. On the contrary it continued to increase, perhaps on account of the nefarious conduct of Murtaza Nizam Shah II. Being a young man Murtaza must have thought of controlling supreme power by playing one against the other. He contrived to keep them away from each other. It is however interesting to note that although both Raju Deccani and Malik Ambar, worked for a common cause they did so with mental reservations. Each looked for an opportunity to oust the other. This created deep misunderstanding between them, and their dispute blurred their vision so that they ignored the importance of unity, coordination and close cooperation. Thus the fortunes of the Nizam Shahi kingdom remained hanging in the balance. The story of its past and greatness became a matter of history. The unending conflicts between Raju Deccani and Malik Ambar produced one crisis after the other, brought one defeat after the other in quick succession. But these defeats, reverses, losses failed to bring home to their minds the inevitable logic of the situation.

The Nizam Shah could neither afford to give much importance to Ambar nor could he completely ignore him. Though he gave him a free hand in the management of his own territories but all the time he constantly kept his eyes on him. Since he believed in ceaseless activity he did not falter in the face of hardships. Difficulties on the other hand, enabled him to stand on his own legs, and to depend upon himself and his meagre resources. He was anxious to recoup his losses and to collect resources for his projects. After his wounds were nealed, Malik Ambar began to collect men and within a short time succeeded in raising an army of 20,000 strong. He freely recruited the Marathas, organised them, trained them in the guerilla tactics, inspired them with confidence, satisfied them by giving them posts of honour, trust and responsibility and infused in them the sense of appreciating the value of unity

and local patriotism. In this manner he marshalled their energies into a single channel. Nor did he fail to raise the morale of the people by his impartial behaviour and by assuring them of security of life and property. He established law and order in the country under his control, suppressed highway robbery and put the revenue administration on sound basis. Life returned to normalcy. Once again there was peace and tranquillity. People began to regard him as statesman and their benefactor. Within a short time he became very popular and his growing popularity increased his striking power.

Malik Ambar's success in varied fields alarmed the Khan Khanan. He and his followers were not conversant with the new tactics of fighting which Malik Ambar had developed. Nor did he feel sure of the support of his own colleagues and subordinates, who were the victims of mutual jealousies and rivalries. Discord and dissensions in the Mughal camp hampered the progress of the Mughals and thereby strengthened the position of Malik Ambar. Besides, he also visualised the possibility of secret assistance being extended by the rulers of Bijapur and Golkunda to Malik Ambar. No sooner would he get than he would suppress his rival Raju, conquer and occupy Nasik and Trimbak. The idea of an alliance amongst the Deccani powers was certainly more dangerous to the Mughal position in the Deccan. This problem began to agitate the mind of Khan Khanan, who seriously began to think over it. How to stem the tide, was the question which made him restless. The only way to solve it was that he should not allow Malik Ambar to throw himself into the arms of the Deccani powers or to support his rival Raju against the Mughals. Like a shrewd diplomat he pursued the double line of action, and for some time he succeeded in his game. In fact there was nothing for the Khan Khanan to fear. The preparations of Malik Ambar for a fresh offensive were still incomplete. The latter was quite aware of the weakness of his position. He realised the risk involved in making another bid for ousting the Mughals, who were larger in number and stronger in their resources. Certain questions taxed his mind. For example, what would happen if his counter offensive against the Mughals failed ? Would it not shatter his dreams to pieces ? Would it not strengthen the hands of his rival Raju Deccani ? Would not a single defeat compel

the rulers of Bijapur and Golkunda to withdraw their support from him? Would this defeat not give a chance to his so-called supporters like Patang Rao, Farhad Khan and Malik Sandal to conspire against him and oust him. Both Khan Khanan and Malik Ambar were aware of the weaknesses of their respective positions. Hence both of them became eager to come to terms. It was in the interest of either of them to be friendly before dealing with their internal enemies.

And so when the Khan Khanan sent proposals of peace, Malik Ambar readily accepted them. To cement the bonds of friendship and to establish personal contacts with the Mughal commander, Malik Ambar marched to Jinapur, where the Khan Khanan accorded to him a fitting reception. Peace was concluded and the boundaries and their respective sphere of influence were defined. While Malik Ambar was still in the camp, it was suggested to the Khan Khanan by his counsellors to put an end to the life of his guest. But the Khan Khanan was not so mean to accept such an advice. He rejected their suggestion scornfully and showered favours on his ally, trusting him like a true friend.[1] In fact this was a temporary truce between the two far-sighted generals, for they needed time to breathe in order to complete their preparations before resuming the struggle. For the Khan Khanan it was a prestige point and for his rival it was a question of survival. The entire future of Malik Ambar rested upon the outcome of his successful diplomacy with the Mughals.

As has been pointed out above, the treaty with the Mughals meant merely cessation of war for it was dictated by the selfish interests of either party. The rising power of Malik Ambar, his success in handling the administrative affairs of the kingdom, the reorganisation of the Nizam Shahi army on new lines, the restoration of law and order in the country, his growing influence and popularity and his ambitious projects offered a potent threat to the Mughal position in the Deccan. At the same time it was patent enough that the Mughal war against him would hamper his task of consolidation. Constant distractions caused by the enemy would neither give him time to think about his future plans nor would enable him to put his house in order.

[1] *Ferishta* III, p. 316; *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, II, pp. 501-2.

Malik Ambar also thought that his friendship with the Mughals would save him from external dangers, would raise his status in the eyes of the neighbouring powers and among his rivals and enemies. He felt that they would be demoralised and their demoralisation would be a preliminary step towards their total annihilation. On the other hand the Khan Khanan was swayed by the idea that if he wins over Malik Ambar, he would be able to exercise restraint on his anti-Mughal activities, which would add a new feather to his cap. Indeed this treaty represented the first stage in the trial of diplomatic skill between the Mughals and Malik Ambar.

After returning from Jinapur, Malik Ambar applied himself to the task of tackling his rivals inside his kingdom. During his absence from the hub of politics, his rivals like Patang Rao, Malik Sandal and Farhad Khan and others had come to Murtaza Nizam Shah II at Ausa and instigated him to oust the chief minister and take authority into his own hands. In fact, the entire administration of the Nizam Shahi kingdom was controlled by Malik Ambar to the utter dislike of the nobles. Hence, a conspiracy against him. Upon his arrival, Murtaza Nizam Shah sent an army against him to surround and arrest him. But Malik Ambar accepted the challenge and decided to face them in battlefield. He hastily moved towards Ausa, defeated and dispersed the conspirators, making Patang Rao captive. He then laid siege to the fort of Ausa, reduced the garrison to narrow straits. The discomfited king, on the advice of Malik Sandal and Farhad Khan laid down his arms and concluded peace with Malik Ambar on the following day.

Freed from the fear of the Mughal attack and the hostile conduct of some of his supporters, Malik Ambar decided to take possession of the fort of Parenda. Consequently, in the company of Murtaza Nizam Shah II, he proceeded in that direction. Manjhan Khan, the Abyssinian commander of the fort who had been holding it for the last twenty years offered opposition on the allegation that he was in league with the Mughals. Though the position was the reverse of it. It was he who was in league with the Mughals and the enemies of Malik Ambar and very keen to bring about his fall. On his arrival near the fort, Malik Ambar tried his best to convince Manjhan Khan of his loyalty towards

the Nizam Shah but in vain. While these negotiations were going on Murtaza Nizam Shah II again joined Farhad Khan, Malik Sandal and other rival nobles, secretly opened negotiations with Manjhan Khan to allow him to enter the fort and assist him in setting aside Malik Ambar. Manjhan Khan agreed. Whereupon, Murtaza Nizam Shah II along with his supporters entered the fort of Parenda. Once more Malik Ambar found himself in a precarious situation. He was left with no other alternative than to open the siege of the fort. It dragged on for about a month. A sheer accident enabled him to capture the fort. Sona Khan, the son of Manjhan Khan, without realising the consequences of his wretched behaviour kidnapped the wives and daughters of some persons inside the fort. This turned the entire garrison against him. He was captured and put to death. In order to save himself, Manjhan Khan in company of Farhad Khan and Malik Sandal left the fort and fled towards Bijapur. The garrison held out for some time more but on the assurances given by Malik Ambar to remove all the restraints which he had imposed upon the king, the garrison opened the gates of the fort. Malik Ambar entered the fort and took its possession but found it difficult to fulfil his promise. And how could he do it when his own master had repeatedly betrayed his confidence ?[1]

From the day, when the Khan Khanan had concluded peace with Malik Ambar until the resumption of hostilities, Emperor Akbar made all efforts to strengthen the bonds of friendship with Ibrahim Adil Shah either to make him neutral or secure his support for consolidating the Mughal position in the Deccan or against Malik Ambar. To achieve his object he sent for Jamaluddin Anju on a mission to Bijapur.[2] The Mir was to conclude a treaty with Adil Shah and fetch his daughter Sultana Begam, who had been betrothed to Prince Daniyal. But instead of bringing the mission to an early termination, Mir Jamaluddin overstayed there. This caused anxiety in the mind of the Mughal Emperor, who was keen to settle his business with Bijapur as early as possible. Since he was well posted on the Mughal position in the Deccan and the rising

[1] *Ferishta* III, p. 317.

[2] *Waqiyat-i-Asad Beg* (E & D, Vol. VI), pp. 152-3, 167.

fortunes of Malik Ambar and his secret understandings with the Deccani powers, he feared the resumption of hostilities. In order to press the matter the Emperor sent Asad Beg, the author of *Waqiyat-i-Asad Beg* to go to Bijapur to escort Mir Jamaluddin Anju, and complete the task assigned to him. Asad Beg moved from Agra and arrived at Burhanpur. He was requested by the Khan Khanan to affect reconciliation between Hasan Ali Beg, the governor of Bir and Malik Ambar. As Asad Beg had brought a royal *firman* for Malik Ambar, the latter was directed to receive it in customary manner.[1]

This was a heaven-sent opportunity for Malik Ambar to confirm his loyalty towards the Mughal Emperor Akbar and convince the Khan Khanan of his sincerity in observing the terms of the treaty. It was an honour for him to receive a royal *firman* and a suitable occasion to cement his friendship with the Mughals. Without throwing his own cards at the table, Malik Ambar acted on the occasion as a shrewd diplomat. He observed all the formalities enjoined in the reception of a royal messenger with a *firman*. He himself covered a distance of one *karoh* to pay homage to the messenger and receive the *firman*. He renewed his acquaintance with Asad Beg and brought him to his own camp where he had made arrangements for a grand reception. In his own pleasing style and chosen words, Asad Beg in his *Waqiyat-i-Asad Beg*, described the manner in which he was welcomed by his host. He writes "All the *amirs*, *mansabdars* of the government, men of letters, religious leaders and saints formed the assemblage, even one tenth of it was not to be seen at one place in India. Religious discourses and recitals from Quran were held on a scale only to be witnessed in the holy town of Mashad. Verily, it was a good fortune to be there and heavenly joy . . .Between the prayers a magnificent dinner was held, which in the Deccani dialect is called as, *Khanduri*. A large tent was pitched in an open square and around it were erected "*Shamiyanas*" (canopies) decorated with figures of fish woven in the covering. In every corner were placed brass and silver vessels one on the top of the other to the height of a

[1] See, Dr. B.P. Saksena's article, "A few unnoticed facts about the early life of Malik Ambar," Proceedings of Indian History Congress, 1941, p. 601.

man, each filled with dainty eatables. Every item of food was deliciously cooked, sprinkled with profusion of spices. There were numerous varieties of tasty puddings, sweets, cakes, unleavened bread, all beyond praise, description and exaggeration. Here Malik Ambar met Hasan Ali Beg, and after the formalities were over both of them retired into privacy and thrashed out their misunderstandings. They made fresh promises and thereafter returned back to confirm the decisions they had taken. After this had been done, Hasan Ali Beg presented a horse and an elephant to his friend Malik Ambar. Then the two parted as friends. A little later, the Mughal envoy Asad Beg was escorted by Malik Ambar's brother to the frontiers of the Adil Shahi kingdom.

On reaching Bijapur, Asad Beg performed his duties with courage and prudence and gave proof of ability in bringing about successful termination of his mission. With the Bijapuri princess Asad Beg started on his homeward journey. At Mangalbir, he found that Mir Jamaluddin Anju had refused to move any further. The lukewarm attitude of Mir Jamaluddin Anju placed Asad Khan in perplexing situation. Add to this rumours of an attack by Malik Ambar's men on the accompanying Bijapuri forces and the return of Bijapuri general who was escorting the palanquin of Begam Sultana. But Asad Beg did not lose courage. Relying on his friendship with Malik Ambar, he asked his men to stay there and watch the situation. Just at the moment arrived Khwajgi Inayatullah, the Mughal envoy who was proceeding on ambassadorial mission to Bijapur. His arrival with a small force relieved Asad Beg of his anxiety. Inayatullah informed him that reinforcements under the command of Mirza Irij and other Mughal officers were on the way and they would be coming shortly after to assist him. Since Malik Ambar had already given an assurance to Asad Beg that he would stand by his promises he remained quiet and allowed the party to move freely towards Ahmadnagar.

Prince Daniyal, who was then at the Mughal head quarters at Burhanpur, marched from there to receive Begam Sultana, the daughter of Ibrahim Adil Shah II.[1] While passing through Daultabad and Nasik, he expected that Raju would appear and

[1] *Ferishta* III, pp. 317-8; *Akbar Nama* III, pp. 1239-44.

pay homage to him. Failing in his expectations the Prince sent him a message asking him to appear before him but Raju refused to wait upon him.[1] When Prince Daniyal threatened to attack him, Raju sent him a haughty reply, saying that "if I oppose your army and any harm befalls me, I have nothing to fall back upon. I shall be annihilated and from whom shall I seek justice? Rest assured, I shall be at your service if it be near Agra. So long as I live, I shall not fail to do it. The source of subsistence and the greatness of my army depends upon your *Sarkar* and I shall continue to indulge in my activities." After sending this arrogant reply though he did not come in the open to attack Prince Daniyal but sent his men to fall upon him again and again. His light Maratha cavalry by their surprise attacks blocked his route and compelled him to send for reinforcements from Jalna. Upon this the Khan Khanan marched with a large army consisting of about 5000 soldiers and joined Prince Daniyal. The arrival of fresh reinforcements compelled Raju's men to withdraw for a little while. But they reappeared again to resume their activities. Their subsequent raids so much demoralised the Prince that he had to conclude peace with Raju Deccani. The latter was permitted to rehabilitate such districts as had been plundered by his men and their revenue was to be divided between the two parties. Henceforward in every village there were to be two *amils* one representing Raju and the other Prince Daniyal.[2] As Patan had not been included in the agreement Raju demanded a loan of thirty thousand *huns* from its merchants, who being certain of the Mughal protection refused to comply with the demand.[3] This compelled Raju to march towards Patan, lay siege to it and seize the merchants of the town and extort from them four to five lacs of *huns*. Whenever his men approached a village or town the people out of fear readily submitted to his demands. But the repeated seizure of their hard earned income led the people to turn against Raju. It also alienated his followers. His high-handedness and harsh behaviour compelled them to desert him and join the ranks of Malik Ambar, who welcomed them and assigned to them villages in *jagir*. In this manner Raju's position became quite

[1] *Futuhat-i-Adil Shahi* (B.M. MS) p. 269.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 270.
[3] *Ibid.*

weak. He found the ground slipping from under his feet. It became difficult for him to hold up his head high.

Constant depletion in the ranks and resources of Raju Deccani induced Malik Ambar to march against him. He arrived near Patan, laid siege to the fort which contained the treasures of Saadat Khan and Raju Deccani. Though he succeeded in capturing the fort but could not retain it for long because Murtaza Nizam Shah's secret plans forced him to leave the place. He hastened towards Parenda, where a conspiracy against him was in the offing. And when he reached there he found the situation tense. The intriguer, Murtaza Nizam Shah II, during his absence had invited Raju, complained to him of the brutal treatment he was receiving at the hands of his prime minister. Raju immediately, left Patan, arrived at Parenda, joined hands with Sultan Murtaza Nizam Shah II and assured him to help him in ousting the regent. There was a pretext also to favour the plot. Malik Ambar's pro-Mughal attitude was neither liked by the Sultan nor by some of his Maratha and Abyssinian supporters. It had deprived the Maratha bands of the opportunity of attacking the Mughals and seizing their rich convoys of provisions, or raiding the Mughal dominions. They saw in Raju's refusal to pay homage to Prince Daniyal, his love for the country and its ruler. No wonder, with one voice they acknowledged him as their leader and decided to support him against Malik Ambar. This was a new development which taxed the patience of the prime minister. He now encamped before the fort of Parenda. For about a month regular skirmishes took place between the rival forces. Thereafter Malik Ambar, being hard pressed by his rival Raju Deccani, solicited help from his ally the Khan Khanan. Bound by the terms of the treaty the latter responded to the call. He issued instructions to Hasan Ali Beg Turkoman, the commandant of the fort of Bir and Bahadur-ul-Mulk to proceed immediately with 3000 soldiers to the assistance of Malik Ambar. Shortly after the arrival of the Mughal reinforcements, Malik Ambar attacked the fort of Parenda, compelled Raju to come out, defeated him and drove him away towards the fort of Daultabad and took possession of the fort. Raju again became active. He seized a large portion of the Nizam Shahi territory and collected 20,000 Marathas. With this army he

never failed to either attack the Mughals or seize their supplies, compelling them always to blow the trumpet of retreat. And then he advanced against Malik Ambar to settle his accounts with him.

While Raju and Malik Ambar were fighting amongst themselves, stirring events took place in the north. The political atmosphere there was overtaken by a storm because of the declining age of the Mughal Emperor and the high soaring ambitions of Prince Salim. After the murder of Abul Fazl there remained none in the Deccan to exercise effective control over the generals there. Prince Daniyal who was far away from the glittering court of Agra, amidst hostile surroundings, considered himself in exile. His failure to suppress Raju and Malik Ambar, to extend an inch of the Mughal territory in the Deccan had not only killed his zeal to fight but assailed his sense of self-respect. He thus began to drown his grief in the wine cups. His death in April 1604 A.D. relieved him of a great burden, which his father had laden upon his heart. A little later, in accordance with the royal orders the Khan Khanan marched from Jalna to Burhanpur to assume the office of Viceroy of the Mughal occupied territory in the Deccan.

The Khan Khanan's departure from Jalna, gave Malik Ambar a splendid opportunity to resume his activities. Being quite conversant with the political conditions prevailing in the north, he collected his troops and marched towards Daultabad where he inflicted a crushing defeat on Raju Deccani. In despair the latter appealed to Khan Khanan for assistance. This gave a chance to the Khan Khanan to display his diplomatic skill. He in response to the call, moved towards Daultabad, where he halted and acted like an umpire, refusing to extend support to either party. This gave a surprise to Raju and Malik Ambar both, who for six months remained in a state of uncertainty. During the interval the Khan Khanan prevented either of them from attacking the other. In the end when Malik Ambar became sure of the neutral role of the Khan Khanan, at latter's suggestion concluded peace with Raju Deccani. Then he retired to Parenda and the Khan Khanan withdrew to Burhanpur.

The recent conduct of the Khan Khanan whom he considered his close and trustworthy ally, caused anxiety to Malik Ambar. The latter now began to analyse former's motives. If he was

abiding the terms of the treaty, why did he respond to Raju's call ? Why did Khan Khanan remain neutral after his arrival near the fort of Daultabad ? And why did he suggest to him to conclude peace with his rival ? As a matter of fact the Khan Khanan was justified in adopting such an attitude. He knew about his real plans, motives and ambitions. As such the only way to control him was to create uncertain conditions and maintain the balance between him and his rival. He neither wished to assist Raju Deccani and incur the hostility of Malik Ambar, nor did he wish the total defeat of Raju or his withdrawal from politics. Malik Ambar's hostility against the Mughals was as dangerous as Raju's defeat or success over Malik Ambar. Hence it was in the interest of the Mughal Commander to prevent Malik Ambar from either effecting a final settlement with his rival Raju or gaining undisputable sway and unrivalled mastery in the Nizam Shahi kingdom. In fact, the rivalry between Malik Ambar and Raju was a source of strength to the Khan Khanan. Malik Ambar saw through the game, read sinister designs in his plans but remained quiet. In this critical hour he could not decide as what should be done to give a diplomatic defeat to the Khan Khanan.

These four years of ceaseless activities of storm and stress form the main contents of the first chapter in Malik Ambar's life. After raising himself from the dust, he tried to take advantage of the chaotic political conditions prevailing in the Nizam Shahi kingdom. He continued to fight against the adverse circumstances created by the opposition of Raju, who was not the man to give a respite to his rival to enable him to formulate a definite programme for the future. Still to the best of his ability, courage and capacity he made the people of the Deccan feel that there was a man to offer them protection, save them and their country from the expansionist and aggressive designs of the Mughals and also take up the cause of the fallen Nizam Shahi dynasty. Off and on he captured, occupied and lost the forts and fortresses suffered reverses in the battlefield but braving heavy odds in the end he succeeded in recovering much territory from the hands of the Mughals. His occasional success inspired him with the hope of the revival of the Nizam Shahi kingdom. Though in the pursuit of this task he had to sustain

the blows of the Mughals whose strength and resources were immensely superior. In fact, he was a man of iron will and firm determination which no storm could shake. He was a man who knew how to bear the shocks and jolts of adversity.

CHAPTER III

CONTEST WITH THE MUGHALS

IN October 1605 A.D. died the illustrious Mughal Emperor Akbar and his son Prince Salim succeeded to the throne under the title of Nuruddin Muhammad Padshah Ghazi. The rebellion of Prince Khusaru in April 1606 A.D. and the siege of Qandhar by the Persian monarch Shah Abbas Safvi, did not give any time to the new Mughal Emperor to turn his attention towards the Deccan. During this troublesome period the Mughal forces operating in the Deccan had been recalled to the north. Consequently, the imperial pressure on the Deccan was relaxed. Except the Khan Khanan there was none at Burhanpur either to cope with the situation or to safeguard the Mughal possessions in the Deccan. Seeing that the Mughal forces were preoccupied elsewhere, Malik Ambar decided to chalk out his future plans. On an earlier occasion the Khan Khanan had given him a diplomatic defeat now it was his turn to pay him in the same coins.

Indeed it was a fine opportunity to teach a lesson to the Khan Khanan. He collected his forces and opened the offensive against the Mughals. He moved in quick succession from one spot to another, conquering all the places through which he passed. Within a short time he recovered a considerable part of the territory which was in the possession of the Mughals. He even advanced as far as Burhanpur, reducing the Khan Khanan to a miserable plight. The latter finding it difficult to check his movements began to smart with sense of defeat and humiliation. Thus, again Malik Ambar gained an upper hand of the Mughals in the Deccan.

After driving the Mughals to the confines of Burhanpur, Malik Ambar transferred his capital from Parenda to Junnar

on account of its strategic importance and its proximity to Daultabad. Moreover, the new place offered him greater facility in waging expeditions against Raju and the Mughals. He now exerted all his energy in inflicting a crushing defeat on his rival Raju Deccani. Fortunately for him at this hour Raju's condition was at the lowest ebb, because of his irrational behaviour and irritating conduct. People began to despise him; soldiers began to desert him in large numbers. Malik Ambar welcomed them, gave them ranks in the army and honoured them with *jagirs*. This buttressed his position. With a large army he marched towards Daultabad. Raju offered gallant resistance but owing to discord and dissesions in his own ranks he could not continue the struggle for long. He retreated to take shelter in the fort. But here too treachery lay in store for him and he was compelled to surrender it. He was arrested and imprisoned in the fort which was occupied by Malik Ambar. His territory which extended from Nasik to the fort of Daultabad was occupied and annexed to the Nizam Shahi kingdom. For four years he remained prisoner in the fort of Junnar, but when Malik Ambar found that he was contriving to escape with the help of the Marathas, he put him to death.[1] In this manner Malik Ambar removed the most troublesome and powerful of his internal opponents and obtained large slice of territory with important strategic forts like Daultabad, which inspired him with the feelings of security such as he had never experienced before. He was now free to turn against the Mughals. With his sway over the entire Nizam Shahi kingdom and all the resources of it at his command, he led successful campaigns again and again against the Mughals.

This contest between Malik Ambar and the Mughal Emperor was unequal in many respects. Very recently he had saved the Nizam Shahi kingdom from total annihilation and as such it was no match for the mighty well consolidated Mughal empire. There was a contrast between him and the Mughal Emperor, so far as character and personality, tastes and temperament were concerned. In certain respects he was superior. He knew how to play upon the sentiments of the local population, organise and arrange forces against the enemy and how to stem

[1] *Ferishta*, III, p. 319-20; *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, II, p. 511.

the tide of the Mughal invasions. He was a sober diplomat, farsighted politician and seasoned statesman. Whereas on the glittering throne of the Mughal empire, there was a person who was completely devoid of these qualities. During the next five years, until the advent of Nurjahan's *junta* to power, if the Mughals suffered reverses, it was due to the indifference of the Mughal Emperor and incompetency and inherent weaknesses of the Mughal generals.

The defeats which Malik Ambar inflicted on the Khan Khanan left a bitter taste in his mouth. His pride had been humbled and confidence shaken. On the other hand, his constant failure in handling the situation continued to rouse the anger of the Mughal emperor. After waiting so long in the vain hope of receiving good news from the Deccan, the emperor summoned the Khan Khanan to explain the causes of his failure. The latter arrived at the court, evaluated the temperament of his master and like an astute politician and seasoned diplomat who had spent greater part of his life in the Deccan, did not fail to impress his master with the polished words and encouraging promises. He stated in writing, "that if I do not complete this service in course of two years, I should deem to be guilty of default (but) on the condition that in addition to the force that had been allotted to that *Subah* 12,000 more horses with Rs. 100,000 should be sent with me".[1] That is how the Khan Khanan persuaded his master to send him again to the Deccan to restore the imperial prestige there. Jahangir had no other alternative than to accept his demands and order that "materials for the army and treasures should be quickly prepared and should be despatched." Five days later Mukhlis Khan, the *Bakhshi* of the *ahadis* was appointed *Bakhshi* of the *subah* of the Deccan, perhaps with the object of assisting Khan Khanan against the enemy. The appointment of a separate *Bakhshi* for the Deccan was over-due. Without him how could the Mughal Viceroy achieve success there.

The appointment of Mukhlis Khan as *Bakhshi* of the *subah* of the Deccan, the acceptance of all the demands of Khan Khanan by the emperor, the written promise of the Khan Khanan to

[1] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, I, p. 149; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, p. 522, *Maasir-i-Jahangiri*, p. 116; *Maasir-ul-Umra*, I, p. 56.

complete the work of the conquest of the Nizam Shahi kingdom and his advance with a large army towards the Deccan caused great anxiety to Malik Ambar. He did not expect that the new Mughal emperor would ever take such serious measures and would follow the policy of his father. But at the same time he was quite aware of the fact that the Mughals would never give up their position in the Deccan. As he had infringed the terms of the treaty, which he had concluded with the Khan Khanan he knew that he would not be left in peace. What perturbed his mind was the large scale war which the Khan Khanan was planning to wage against him. Only recently, he had started the work of recovering the lost territories of the Nizam Shahi state and he needed time to consolidate his gains. Hence, he did not wish to come in any conflict with the Mughals until the latter forced it upon him. Any war with the Mughals at this stage was sure to hamper his progress and a single defeat would be enough to give a blow to his rising reputation. Besides, it would give a set-back to his plans. Therefore, urged by the considerations of personal security and by the desire to protect the gains, Malik Ambar opened negotiations with Ibrahim Adil Shah II and sought his assistance. In the past whenever he suffered at the hands of the internal or external enemies Adil Shah always extended him support by observing neutrality. On this occasion, following the example of Sher Shah, Malik Ambar wrote to Ibrahim Adil Shah II, "it is my desire to fight the Mughal troops as long as life remains in my body. May I through your Majesty's daily increasing fortunes succeed in expelling the Mughals from the Deccan". He also requested Ibrahim Adil Shah II to hand over the fort of Qandhar, which he had wrested from the Nizam Shahis and he proposed to bring the two states nearer by matrimonial alliance.[1]

[1] ابراهیم عادل‌شاه راچون بقای نام و حفاظت ملک نظام شاهیان منظور و ملحوظ بود مسئولات ثلثه عنبررا بدرجه قبول فائز گردانید قلعه قندهار باو بازگذاشت تاذخیره و خزینه و اسباب واثاث رادرانجا مضبوط مضبوط گذاشته خاطرجمع شدو نیز ده هزار سوار چیده ازلشکر جدا نموده برکمک و مدد عنبر متعین نمودتامدام همدرانجا بوده‌مدد نموده باشندوملک عنبر بجهت نعلبندی این لشکر ولایت سه لکهه هون علحده مقطع نموده‌داد - (*Basatin-us-Salatin*, pp. 264-65)

In full appreciation of the impending Mughal invasion, Ibrahim Adil Shah II responded to the request of Malik Ambar. He immediately sent ten thousand horsemen to render military assistance to him, gave the fort of Qandhar for the residence of his family and for storing the provisions, and contracted the matrimonial alliance between the families of Yakut Khan, an influential Abyssinian noble of Bijapur and Malik Ambar. It was settled that the daughter of Yakut Khan be married to Aziz-ul-Mulk commonly known as Fath Khan, the son of Malik Ambar.[1] The marriage was performed amidst great rejoicings which continued for forty days. *Basatin-us-Salatin* had given a fairly good account of this solemn ceremony.[2] Ibrahim

[1] دختر یاقوت خان که از غلامان عمده و مخصوصان بارگاه بود و اورا باصبیه صالحه یکی از حرمهای محل عقد مزاوجت بسته بود بعزیز الملک پسر کلان ملک عنبر نامزد فرمود و ملک از پذیرائی مسئولات ثلاثه خصوص از اجابت ثالث فرحناک و شادآگین شده - (p. 265)

[2] وصلت دادن عادلشاه دختر یاقوت خان راکه یکی از غلامان خاص بود باعزیز الملک پسر عنبر چون اسباب و مواد ساخته و پرداخته شد عادلشاه بجهت آوردن عزیز الملک از حبشیر که تختگاه نظام شاهیان شده بود حضرت مولانا سید حبیب الله قدس سره روانه فرمود مولانا تشریف برده عزیز الملک را از حبشیر بدار السلطنت بدیابور آوردند بجهت سکونت عزیز الملک حویلی کشور خان بزرگ متعین و مقرر گشت مراسم شادی و لوازم کتخدائی بهزاران فرخی و فیروزی درچند مدت زینت اداپذیرفت بعد از آن عروس و داماد با اسباب و سامان جهاز شایان و فراوان روانه حبشیر گشتند و چند امرای معتبر در رکاب عروس نامزد شدند چون عروس و داماد بالخیر و العافیت بافرخی و مبارکی نزدیک حبشیر رسیدند ملک عنبر بلوازم استقبال پرداخته به تعظم و توقیر تمام عروس و امرای عادلشاهی را اندرون قلعه درآورد و جشنها و شادمانیهای فراوان بجا آورد نسبت بالمرای عادلشاهی و مخصوصیان بارگاهی پیش از پیش لوازم سلوک و مدارات بتقدیم رسانید جداگانه درمنزل هریک آمده اخلاص مندی و مروت کیشی به ظهور آورد و رسوخ و اخلاص و ارادات خویش که نسبت عادلشاه میداشت پیش هرکس اظهار کرد پس ازان به خلعتهای فاخره و نقود و جواهر و افربرقدر شان هرکس عطاکرده رخصت انصراف فرمود درهمین نزدیکی خانخانان از دهلی به برهانپور رسیده بخدمت عادل شاه قاصد و نامه فرستاد از رسیدن خویش مع الخیر به برهانپور اطلاع بخشید و ملک عنبر نیز سازش و لوازم اخلاص مندی مرعی داشت - (pp. 265-66)

Adil Shah himself took a keen interest in the ceremony. He provided from the state exchequer a handsome dowry for the bride and spent about twenty thousand *huns* (Rs. 80,000) on the fireworks alone.[1] After the celebration of the nuptials on 5th Feb. 1609 A.D. Fath Khan and his bride left Bijapur for Junnar. Thus, Malik Ambar succeeded in achieving his two-fold objective. On the one hand, he secured the support of the Adil Shah, in his forthcoming struggle with the Khan Khanan and on the other the matrimonial alliance with an Abyssinian noble of Bijapur improved his social status. Now in the difficult times he could safely depend upon the Abyssinian party at the Adil Shahi court. Sometimes, afterwards again at his request Ibrahim Adil Shah II sent another force of three to four thousand cavalry to his assistance.[2] He attacked the fort of Antur, seized it from the hands of the Mughals putting the entire garrison to sword.[3]

Upon his return to the Deccan the Khan Khanan made efforts to improve the Mughal position. As regards the emperor he too gave him encouragement from time to time to carry on the work smoothly. He lavished favours on him by presenting to him jewelled sword with waist band, robes of honour, elephants etc.[4] But despite all this the Khan Khanan failed to cope with the increasing power and popularity of Malik Ambar. This was due to recurrent jealousy and dissensions amongst his generals. Surrounded by hostile elements, it was rather impossible for him either to pursue uniform policy against the enemy or take a concerted action against him. In short, the Khan Khanan could neither control the situation nor secure obedience of his orders. Within a year it became clear to him that success was as remote as ever.

Malik Ambar continued to score against Khan Khanan. In fact he had made the position of the Mughals very weak. After having collected a large army Malik Ambar attacked Jahangir Beg, the commandant of the fort of Patan which the Mughals had seized from the hands of Raju Deccani. The Khan Khanan sent Dorab Khan to his assistance. Dorab Khan marched towards Patan and succeeded in escorting him back

[1] *Basatin-us-Salatin*, p. 267.
[2] *Ibid*.
[3] *Futuhat-i-Adil Shahi*, p. 271; *Basatin-us-Salatin*, p. 267.
[4] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Vol. I, pp. 151, 153.

to Jinapur. A little later, Shahnawaz Khan was sent to save Patan from falling into the hands of Malik Ambar. But before he could reach his destination Malik Ambar had forced his way into the fort, threw his own garrison inside and had come out with a view to move towards Jinapur, the Mughal headquarters. Hardly had he covered some distance than his progress was barred by Shahnawaz Khan, who attacked him and compelled him to fall back.[1] After this, Shahnawaz Khan returned to Jinapur where he met Dorab Khan and Jahangir Beg, but the assemblage of the Mughal forces at Jinapur could not dishearten Malik Ambar. Before the Mughals could become strong in that centre, Malik Ambar collected his forces and again moved towards Jinapur to deliver an attack on the Khan Khanan and disperse the Mughals. He successfully surrounded the Mughal camp and compelled the Khan Khanan to retire to Burhanpur. After the Mughal forces had evacuated Jinapur, Malik Ambar occupied it and sent his men to pursue them. Having failed to stand in the field against the enemy, owing to his inadequate forces the Khan Khanan in his distress repeatedly requested emperor for further reinforcements.[2] The very same year, according to *Mirat-i-Ahamdi*, Malik Ambar invaded Gujarat.[3]

Because of the Deccani intrusions into the Mughal territory and the fear of subsequent attacks by the enemy the emperor was compelled to think about the safety of the provinces situated on the south western frontiers of his empire. The immediate questions which occupied his mind were e.g. the proper management of the Mughal possessions in the Deccan; the protection of the south western frontiers of his empire from the encroachments of the Deccani forces. These problems were baffling and to solve them he appointed Prince Parvez to the Viceroyalty of the Deccan. Asaf Khan was appointed as his guardian and adviser. A little later, Raja Man Singh was honoured with a jewelled sword and Rs. 20,00,000 were given to him for the expenses of his army. He was also

[1] *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, II, p. 513.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 516.
[3] See, *Mirat-i-Ahamdi*, text, p. 189.

ordered to accompany Prince Parvez to the Deccan.[1] Likewise Raja Jagannath and Rai Jai Singh were also promoted to the ranks of 5000 *Zat* and *4000 sawar* respectively and were sent to the Deccan. Jahangir also appointed 1000 *ahadis* to be in attendance of the Prince. The latter was also given the provinces of Berar, Khandesh, fort of Asir and Abdullah Khan was placed under him.[2]

It is interesting to note that never before the gravity of the crisis in the Deccan, as caused by the activities of Malik Ambar was so seriously realised by the Mughal government as on this occasion. This was an open contest between tle imperial power and an independent state. The former was keen to assert its authority over the latter, while the latter was desirous to save its integrity and independence. Inevitably this contest led the Mughal government to promote a large number of officers and nobles. The appointment of the latter and the mobilisation of their contingents towards the Deccan bears an eloquent testimony to the measures taken by the Mughals to avert the crisis and curb the rising power of Malik Ambar. To meet the expenditure, which was to be incurred on the maintenance of the Mughal forces fighting in the Deccan, the emperor ordered Bihari Chand *qanungo* of the *sarkar* of Agra, to take 1000 footmen and equipment from the *Zamindars* of Agra, fix their monthly pay and send them to Prince Parvez. He took this step without understanding its consequences. It was certainly unprecedented and unwise which in the long run caused agrarian discontent. Despite these measures, undertaken by the imperial government, the forces of Malik Ambar continued to create trouble. The assemblage of large forces on the frontiers of the Deccan neither unnerved them nor shook their confidence.

Eighteen months after the arrival of the Khan Khanan from the north to the Deccan, arrived Prince Parvez in company of 20,000 *sawars* under the command of Raja Man Singh, Khan Jahan Lodi, and many others. As this force slowly moved towards Burhanpur, Malik Ambar in order to entice the enemy withdrew towards the frontiers of the Adil Shahi kingdom. The

[1] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, I, pp. 156-159.
[2] *Ibid.*

idea behind this move was to leave the ground clear for the enemy, negotiate for assistance with the other two Deccani powers, calculate the numerical strength of the enemy and then reappear to fight the imperial forces. Not been able to understand the strategy, the imperial forces continued to move from Burhanpur until they reached at a short distance from Malik Ambar's camp. To maintain the line of communications the Mughals had established military posts at various points. Raja Man Singh the famous Hindu warrior was sent to open the conflict.

By this time Malik Ambar had won over Ibrahim Adil Shah II. Even though the Adil Shahi forces were busy in the Karnatak expedition, the Adil Shah sent an army of 4000 soldiers for his assistance. The arrival of reinforcements from Bijapur strengthened Malik Ambar's position. He divided his army, sending one contingent to lay siege to the fort of Ahmadnagar and the other to harass the imperialists and block their advance. As the Mughals were quite unfamiliar with the guerilla tactics of fighting followed by the Deccanis, they had to experience great hardships. The shock tactics, surprise attacks during the night, seizure of the provisions and the speedy flight of the light Maratha cavalry, shattered the nerves of the Mughals who were proficient in fighting regular battles in open fields. Their failure to cope with the activities of Malik Ambar led them to bow their heads in shame. Prince Parvez shared the views of his officers that this discomfiture was only due to the mischief created by the Khan Khanan. The Prince was himself completely fed up with constant fighting. The scorching sun of the summer and the exhaustion of provisions caused demoralisation in the Mughal camp and compelled the Prince to conclude peace with Malik Ambar and to withdraw to Burhanpur.[1]

Ever since his arrival in the Deccan in 1609 A.D. Prince Parvez tried his best to improve the situation, but he failed to affect any change for the better. Malik Ambar's stars were in ascendant. He continued to inflict humiliation and defeat on the enemy and at one stage the situation grew so critical that Asaf Khan suggested to the Mughal emperor the desirability of his

[1] *Basatin-us-Salatin*, pp. 267-8.

presence to the scene of warfare and supervise the military operations against Malik Ambar. The fact of the matter is that Prince Parvez and Raja Man Singh did not seriously follow the advice tendered to them by the Khan Khanan,who was the only man adequately conversant with the affairs of the Deccan. Again and again the Khan Khanan had asked the prince to wait and watch the situation. But contrary to this suggestion, Prince Parvez and Raja Man Singh acted in all possible haste, with the result that the imperialists had to suffer setbacks. The Khan Khanan's enemies did not miss the opportunity of putting the entire blame on his head, accusing him of slow marches, incompetency, indifferent attitude and not providing the relief in time. The old veteran listened to their accusations made efforts to clean the slate by meeting all charges levelled against him. But all this was in vain.

The Mughal emperor gave a serious thought to Asaf Khan's proposal, but he was dissuaded by his courtiers from accepting it. When the matter was being discussed in details, Khan Jahan Lodi like a cunning opportunist, with the intention of improving his prospects by catching the imagination of the emperor, politely said, "If I am ordered I myself will go and attend on the Prince and will, please God, perform this duty." His boast was taken seriously by all those present in the assembly and permission was given to him to proceed to the Deccan. He was also given instructions that after the matters had been settled he should return without delay.[1] With sufficient reinforcements under the command of valiant generals like Raja Bir Singh Deo, Raja Vikramajit, Saif Khan Barha and others, Khan Jahan Lodi marched towards the Deccan.[2]

The Khan Khanan in the meanwhile, had devised an elaborate plan of delivering a surprise attack on Malik Ambar. The rainy season had already started. Against the better judgement of his followers the Khan Khanan made a dash into the Nizam Shahi territory. To a certain stage his plan worked according to his expectations, but it ended in tragic failure on account of rains. Moreover the Khan Khanan did not have unanimous

[1] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, I, p. 161.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 161-3; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, pp. 525-26; *Maasir-ul-Umra* I, p. 546.

support of his followers, who from the very beginning were unwilling partners in the campaign. Also the rainy season was not suitable for the military operations in that region. Finally the Khan Khanan did not equip himself with adequate provisions. Through mud and mire with inadequate provisions and under the heavy showers, the imperialists half-heartedly moved from one square to the other.

Malik Ambar avoided pitched battles. He sent his light Maratha cavalry to cut off enemy's line of communications and seize their convoy of provisions. These Maratha bands lured the Mughals into the rugged hills and narrow ravines of Balaghat, delivered surprise night attacks on them and made their retreat and forward movements impossible. Supplies ran short in the imperial camp. Surrounded by the enemy in a hostile country, they found it difficult to replenish it from local sources. Scarcity conditions began to rage in the army, taking a heavy toll of men, horses, beasts of burden etc. Those who were in the Khan Khanan's train began to condemn him for his negligence, rashness, treachery and inefficiency. Driven to despair and in sheer disgust the Khan Khanan concluded a dishonourable peace with Malik Ambar and returned to Burhanpur.

It has earlier been stated that one section of Malik Ambar's forces had been directed to besiege the fort of Ahmadnagar. This army arrived there and opened its siege. The Mughal commander, Khwaja Beg Mirza Safvi, who was a relative of Shah Tahmasp of Persia and who held the fort on behalf of the Mughals ever since its occupation by the latter, made efforts to defend it. But after compelling the Khan Khanan to withdraw to Burhanpur, Malik Ambar arrived at Ahmadnagar to second the efforts of his men, in pressing the siege with vigour. The usual tactics for reducing the fort was adopted. The lines of communications with the outside was cut off and the supply of provisions inside the fort was intercepted. The Khwaja was reduced to a miserable condition. In distress he appealed for help to the Khan Khanan. Forgetting the fact that he had been twice humbled and defeated by the Deccani forces the Khan Khanan once again moved from Burhanpur, arrived at Jalnapur, where he was again defeated by the enemy. The news of fresh defeat of the Khan Khanan caused great

consternation amongst the people inside the fort. They at once decided to evacuate it. Khwaja Beg tried to encourage the garrison by asking it to hold on until the arrival of fresh reinforcements from Burhanpur but in vain. He was at last compelled to yield to the wishes of the garrison and leave the fort on the promise of safe passage to Burhanpur.[1]

The success of Malik Ambar alarmed Ibrahim Adil Shah, the ruler of Bijapur. Ibrahim had never expected that Malik Ambar would become so strong and powerful. He became apprehensive of his own safety. He thought that a person who had driven away the superior forces of the Mughals from the Nizam Shahi dominions and had recovered every inch of territory, might also turn towards south to recover the fort of Sholapur. In the high soaring ambitions of Malik Ambar, Ibrahim Adil Shah II saw a new danger. In order to checkmate his designs Ibrahim Adil Shah opened negotiations with Prince Parvez. The latter was already fed up with the Deccan wars, therefore, he was inclined for peace. Of this he also sent information to the Mughal Emperor.

Such were the conditions in the Deccan when Khan Jahan Lodi reached Burhanpur. The recent reverses of the Khan Khanan had eclipsed his influence and prestige. Although he had promised to the Mughal emperor that within two years he would complete the conquest of the Nizam Shahi kingdom, but he had failed to achieve the object. His constant failures had made him a target of universal ridicule. In fact, ever since the arrival of Prince Parvez in the Deccan, a clique had come into existence, which constantly worked against him. The members of this clique took delight in his humiliation. They persistently misrepresented his actions to the Mughal emperor, prejudiced his mind and affected his judgement. Khan Jahan Lodi also joined this party. For a fair display of his talents the latter required a clean field. He succeeded in persuading the Emperor to recall the Khan Khanan to the court, so that he may direct the affairs of the Deccan single-handed and claim for himself the glory. He had also promised to conquer the kingdoms of Ahmadnagar and Bijapur with in period of

[1] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Vol. I, pp. 181-2; *Basatin-us-Salatin* p. 270, *Maasir-ul-Umra*, II, pp. 514-16, 518.

two years, failing which he said he would never show his face to the emperor. The latter accepted his request and permitted him to do the needful for the attainment of the objective. The supreme command of the Mughal forces in the Deccan was vested in him. Mahabat Khan was commissioned to go to the Deccan with instructions to investigate into the causes of the Mughal reverses and escort the Khan Khanan to the court.[1] Khan Azam was also sent with a large army to assist Khan Jahan Lodi.

Mahabat Khan came to the Deccan and after a brief stay at Burhanpur returned to Agra with the Khan Khanan. After his arrival in the Deccan, Khan Azam too exerted great influence on Ibrahim Adil Shah to remain loyal to the Mughal emperor and desist from extending any assistance to Malik Ambar. In fact Khan Azam had been sent to ascertain the views of Ibrahim Adil Shah II on the possibilities of Mughal-Adil Shahi alliance. A little known collection of four letters, known as *Gulshan-i-Balaghat*, written on behalf of the Khan Azam to Ibrahim Adil Shah confirm the story of the efforts of the Khan Azam to isolate the Adil Shah from Malik Ambar.[2] Such a course was essential for obtaining complete victory over Malik Ambar. When Ibrahim Adil Shah showed his readiness to conclude an alliance with the Mughal emperor, Mir Jamaluddin Anju was sent to Bijapur to conduct the negotiations to a successful conclusion. The royal envoy was welcomed at Bijapur by Ibrahim Adil Shah, who gave assurances of his future loyalty towards the Mughal emperor.[3]

It was believed that by the simple process of changing the commanders and by bringing Ibrahim Adil Shah II closer, the expected results would follow, but this was not to be. Despite their best efforts, the imperialists failed to gain a sound footing in the Deccan. Khan Jahan Lodi who commanded an imposing array of about 2000 *ahadis*, 10,000 horsemen, experienced

[1] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Vol. I, p. 178; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, p. 525; *Maasir-i-Jahangiri*, p. 132; *Basatin-us-Salatin*, p. 271; *Travels of William Finch*, p. 25.

[2] See, an article entitled, "Letters of Aziz Koka to Ibrahim Adil Shah II," written by Mrs. K. N. Hasan and Mrs. Mansura Haidar read at the Allahabad Session of the Indian History Congress, 1965.

[3] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Vol. I, p. 203.

generals like, Khan Alam, Faridun Barlas, Yusuf Khan, Ali Khan Niazi and others and drew Rs. 3,00,00,000 from the royal treasury, too, like his predecessors moved from one region to other in the hope of bringing Malik Ambar down to his knees. He also, like his predecessors found it difficult to counter the guerilla tactics of the Deccanis. On this occasion also the imperialists had the better generals and also commanders there was no paucity of men and munitions, yet they could not gain an iota of success. As usual Malik Ambar divided his troops sending one contingent to hover round the imperial camp, and deliver surprise night attack on the rear or pursue the usual tactics of luring them into the dense forests and then attack and disperse them. The failure of Khan Jahan Lodi made it clear that Malik Ambar was superior to him as a general and commander. Though Khan Jahan Lodi did his best but he could neither control the Mughal officers and prevent their mutual recrimination, nor could canalise their energy. His over-confidence, haughty temperament and pride joined to his failure of studying enemy's strategy were responsible for his discomfiture.[1]

After having gained one more success over the imperialists Malik Ambar decided to put his house in order. Earlier he had put down his enemies like Malik Sandal, Raju Deccani, Patang Rao and Farhad Khan but for one reason or the other he had spared his master Murtaza Nizam Shah II, by forgiving him. On the day on which Murtaza had complained to Raju about the high-handedness of Malik Ambar, he had sealed his future. Instead of acknowledging the debt of gratitude to his benefactor, who had raised him from the dust to the jewelled throne, he started forming factions against him. His role threatened peaceful conditions in the country, exposed the state to foreign peril and impaired the popularity of the man who was giving life to it. Malik Ambar was not slow in realising that his master was not playing his part according to his wishes and expectations. How could then he trust him ? It was he who had incited Patang Rao, Malik Sandal and Farhad Khan to rebellion. It may also be mentioned that by this time

[1] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, I, pp. 183-4.

Murtza Nizam had attained his youth. And like a young man he felt dissatisfied with his position of subordination. Ambitions made him restless. The concentration of entire political authority into the hands of one man and ever increasing influence of Ambar had not only overshadowed his personality but had reduced him to titular positions. Born in typical atmosphere of the Deccan, his soul clamoured for freedom from bondage which Malik Ambar had imposed upon him. The regent and the regency had become quite unbearable to him. Hence there was an open clash of interests. As a king he wished to assert his position by overthrowing the regency. How could Malik Ambar tolerate it ? So long as he was busy in dealing with internal and external enemies, he ignored him. In 1609 A.D. when he became free from all troubles, he turned his attention towards him to settle the past accounts. So serious were his differences with his master in internal and external issues that Malik Ambar brought him from Junnar to Daultabad to keep him nearer to himself. The gulf continued to widen. Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II intervened and tried his best to patch up the differences but failed. It is related both by Ferishta and Mirza Ibrahim Zubairi that before resorting to any drastic step Malik Ambar consulted Ibrahim Adil Shah, who disapproved the plan of deposing Murtaza Nizam Shah II. On latter's behalf he again intervened and restored good relations between him and his wise minister.[1] Even if we suppose that Ibrahim Adil Shah succeeded in his plan, his success would have been only partial. None of the contemporary or later historians have mentioned the main cause of the conflict which assumed serious proportions in 1610 A.D.

But according to Peter Van Den Broecke, the Dutch Traveller, "later it happened that King's first wife who was white Persian woman reproached Malik Ambar's daughter with bitter words, saying that she was only a slave girl and the concubine of the king and that her father was a rebel. The daughter told all this to her father, who was so angry that he determined to have the king killed and at last he gained over king's secretary, Mir Abul Fateh, who poisoned him with a drink of which he

[1] *Ferishta*, III, p. 319; *Basatin-us-Salatin*, p. 270.

died, leaving a minor son."[1] As any minister would have done under the circumstances, Malik Ambar too at once," took the charge of the minor son and made himself the master of the country. The son is now twelve years old and was only five when his father died. The Malique goes in person twice in a week to pay his respects. The boy king is named Nizam Shah. The Queen who was the cause of the whole quarrel was also poisoned after her husband's death."[2] The name of this minor prince whom Malik Ambar raised to the throne was Burhan Nizam Shah III (1610-1630 A.D.).

Since contemporary historians somehow or the other have omitted to record this change, the name of Murtaza Nizam Shah II has been brought down to the year 1632 A.D. by modern historians like Dr. R.P. Tripathi, Dr. B.P. Saksena and other historians."[3] Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar has confused the name of Murtaza Nizam Shah with Burhan. While narrating the events of 1600-1601 A.D., he mentions, "that a noble set up Burhan Nizam Shah son of prince Shah Ali as king as king."[4] In fact Murtaza Nizam Shah II, was raised to the throne in 1601 A.D. and his life was cut short by Malik Ambar in 1610 A.D. as mentioned before. The historians who have mentioned that Murtza Nizam Shah II lived up to the year 1632 A.D. have committed two-fold error. firstly, they made a straight jump from Murtaza Nizam Shah to Husain Nizam Shah III, and secondly, they left out Burhan Nizam Shah III, as a person unworthy of any notice. The statement of the Dutch traveller Peter Van Den Broecke, has been corroborated by Abdul Baqi Nahawandi, the author of *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, who clearly mentions that Malik Ambar administered poison and got rid of Murtaza Nizam Shah II,[5] and also by

[1] See, Journal of Indian History, p. 147.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] See my article, "Burhan Nizam Shah III," Islamic Culture, Jan. 1966, pp. 33-37.

[4] Sir J.N. Sirkar, *House of Shivaji*, p. 34; Also see, *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, II, p. 516.

[5] According to Van Ravestyn, Malik Ambar was the grand father of the young king Baijro Nisamxa (Burhan Nizam Shah). A daughter of Malik Ambar was married to the old king i.e. father of Baijro Nisamxa and thus although the young king was not a son of Malik Ambar's

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Mirza Ibrahim Zubairi, the author of Basatin-us-Salatin, who writes in a different manner. He not only refers to the change, but pointedly mentions the name of Burhan Nizam Shah in connection with the events of the reign of Muhammad Adil Shah (1628–58 A.D.). It is difficult to say whether Burhan was from the first or the second wife of Murtaza Ni am Shah II.[1] History is silent on this point. Since he ascended the throne as a child, he had to repose trust and confidence in Malik Ambar. Thus for the next sixteen years of his life Burhan Nizam Shah III lived like a silent spectator to the events that took place on the political chess-board of the Deccan.

Meanwhile Khan Jahan had become more active. He began devising plans to surround Malik Ambar from all sides and inflict a crushing defeat upon him. But the Malik was now the unrivalled master of the entire region from Bankot to Bassien in the west, to the frontiers of Bijapur in the south, from Bidar in the south east to Khandesh in the north, including Baglana and Balaghat or the southern Berar. Therefore he did not find it difficult to repel the blow and foil the plans of the Mughal general. In the past, his successful campaigns against the Mughals not only enhanced his military reputation, power and popularity but had enabled him to restore his prestige of the Nizam Shahi kingdom. And yet he was looked upon as rebel of mean repute and a self-seeking opportunist. But now he was considered to be seasoned pilot, leader of an independent state, with a trained, organised, equipped militia behind him to support him in difficult times. His work of consolidation and expansion, defence and offence, retrocession and aggression went hand in hand. His new position at Daultabad placed him in a centre from where he could move in all directions.

Like his predecessor the Khan Khanan, Khan Jahan Lodi also failed to remove the feelings of jealousy and supineness from the hearts of the Mughal officers and nobles and thus he also realised at length that he was striking his head against an iron

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daughter, he was a step-child of her and hence a relation. "See R.D. Wadekar's article, "Malik Ambar from Dutch sources," Bharat Itihas Shamshodhak Mandal, Poona, 1930-32; Vol. 11-12, pp. 7-10.

[1] *Basatin-us-Salatin*, p. 270.

wall. In other words, he too could not make any headway against the enemy. The stalemate stirred the sensitive mind of the emperor and he himself prepared a plan, known as the famous grand plan of 1610 A.D., to humble the pride of Malik Ambar. This plan aimed at two pronged attack on Ahmadnagar. It was decided that Abdullah Khan Firuz Jang should march from the direction of Nasik and Trimbak with the Gujarat forces, under his command. This force was to consist of trustworthy officers like Raja Ram Dass, Khan Alam, Saif Khan Barha, Ali Mardan Bahadur, Zafar Khan and others. The total strength of it was to be 14000 soldiers. Abdullah Khan had been instructed to be in close touch with the movements of the other imperial army, which was to advance under the command of Khan Jahan Lodi, Raja Man Singh and other leaders from Berar and Khandesh side. The commanders of the two forces had also been instructed to attack the enemy simultaneously on the appointed day. The success of the plan as the emperor himself explained depended upon three things, viz. complete unity amongst the *amirs* and the commanders of the two different forces; that elimination of self-interest among them and uniformity in action. Unfortunately none of these conditions could be fulfilled. Cooperation, unity, coordination in action remained conspicuous by their absence among the Mughal officers stationed in the Deccan. The sense of racial superiority, selfish interests, personal feuds, rivalries, and jealousies hampered the progress against the enemy. The direct supervision of the Mughal emperor in the execution of the plan could have saved the disaster. The presence of the emperor on the scene of action in 1610 was absolutely necessary. But that was not to be. He left every thing to his counsellors and commanders.

Let us see how the plan was implemented. Abdullah Khan Firuz Jang, a haughty, short-tempered man, urged by the ambition of taking the entire credit of success against Malik Ambar, made an impetuous dash into the Nizam Shahi country by descending the ghats. Neither did he care to send the runners (*qasidan*) to bring the news about the movements of the other force, nor did he in accordance with the previous arrangement and understanding realised the dire necessity of coordinating his movements with those of the other party so

that on the fixed day, they could surround the enemy and attack him. Relying upon his own strength he always turned down the wise counsels of his subordinates. Ram Dass had long discussions with him and he tried to persuade him to march slowly, take precautions and act cautiously but in vain.

Malik Ambar by now was conversant with the nature of the Mughal officers. He was already looking for such an opportunity. He was not the man to miss it. He closely watched the movements of the Mughal forces and then decided to follow the guerilla tactics, knowing that it was quite unknown to the enemy. His Maratha *bargis* avoiding pitched battles hovered round the right and left wings of the imperialists, harassed them by their surprise night attacks either by luring them into the dense forests or by intercepting their line of communications and thus creating scarcity of provisions amongst them. Occasionally, he distracted their ranks by throwing rockets at them. No sooner did Abdullah Khan Firuz Jang reach Daultabad, he found himself completely isolated. His troops were almost tired and demoralised. He had no information about the movements of the other army. Malik Ambar exploited the opportunity in his favour. He enrolled the soldiers who deserted the Mughal service and then he suddenly appeared before Abdullah Khan Firuz Jang and delivered a surprise attack upon him. The latter was defeated and compelled to leave the field and retrace his steps. He was hotly pursued by the Deccani forces and it was with great difficulty that he reached Gujarat. During the pursuit he lost many soldiers and officers like Ali Mardan Khan Bahadur and Zulfiqar Beg. As regards Malik Ambar, flushed with success and puffed up with pride, he returned to Daultabad.[1]

On receiving the report of defeat and flight of Abdullah Khan, the Berar and Khandesh division of the imperial army under Khan Jahan Lodi also retreated and joined Prince Parvez at Adilabad.[2] Khan Jahan Lodi held Abdullah Khan responsible

[1] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, I, pp. 219-21 ; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, p. 533 ; *Maasir-ul-Umra*, I, pp. 98, 99, 185 ; *Travels of William Finch*, p. 25.

[2] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, II, pp. 219-21 ; *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, II, p. 520; *Basatin-us-Salatin*, p. 271 ; *Maasir-ul-Umra*, I, pp. 98, 99, 185 ; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, p. 533.

for the failure of the plan. He accused him of rashness, negligence in performing his duty. He was charged with non-compliance of the instructions because he did not take adequate precautions at the time of entering enemy's country. Undoubtedly, the plan failed because of the mistakes of Abdullah Khan but it cannot be denied that there were certain intrinsic defects in the plan itself. In the first instance it did not take note of the new tactics of fighting which Malik Ambar had developed. Secondly, it ignored the difficulty of ensuring harmonious and concerted action on the part of the Mughal generals posted in the Deccan, and thirdly, it did not define the respective status of the officers. Abdullah Khan Firuz Jang, Khan Jahan Lodi, Amir-ul-Umra, and Raja Man Singh were of equal ranks. None was ready to serve as subordinate to the other. In temperament they differed from each other and they held their own views on the manner in which the plan should be executed. In striking contrast enemy's position was much better. Malik Ambar's generals and commanders rigidly adhered to the instructions given to them. There was immense enthusiasm in them to push back the forward movement. Even in the matters of military tactics and organisation and the method of handling the situation, Malik Ambar's generals were superior. As in numerical strength the Deccani forces were smaller, they could easily make a shift in their plans or move in any direction they liked. Besides, they could also depend upon the local population so far as the supply of food and fodder was concerned.

When the emperor received the news of the disaster suffered by the imperial army his anger knew no bounds. In a fit of indignation, he reprimanded all the officers and condemned Abdullah Khan Firuz Jang. Once more he seriously decided to take the field personally and supervise operations. He discussed the matter with his advisers and asked them to consider the problem from various angles. Every one who took part in the discussions, realised the acuteness of the situation, appreciated the difficulties which the Mughal officers had to face in the Deccan, but none of them relished the idea of Emperor's going to the scene of war. It was generally believed that the Khan Khanan was secretly on friendly terms with Malik Ambar

against whom he had been sent twice. Yet on one occasion Khwaja Abul Hasan remarked, "that no one had a firmer grasp of the Deccan problems and no one is better fitted to solve them than the old Mughal general Khan Khanan, who had unjustly been accused of treachery." The fact of the matter is that the Mughal nobility under emperor Jahangir had become quite lethargic and none of its members was interested in the Deccan problem. Had the emperor himself been interested in going to the Deccan and conducting the operations under his personal supervision, he would have never listened to all this. As was expected, this time too, emperor Jahangir gave up the idea and accepted the suggestion of Abul Hasan. Thus the Khan Khanan was again ordered to proceed to the Deccan. He was vested with the supreme command of the Mughal forces in the Deccan and was promoted to the rank of 6000 and was honoured with a dress of honour, a special elephant and a Iraqi horse. Likewise his sons Shahnawaz Khan, Dorab Khan and Rahmandad were promoted to high *mansabs*.[1]

Accompanied by his sons and a large army under his command, the Khan Khanan marched from Agra towards the Deccan (1612 A.D.). As on previous occasions the Khan Khanan after his arrival in the Deccan decided to pursue a cautious policy and recover his lost prestige. Luckily for him the political sky was clear at the Mughal headquarters at Burhanpur and he was free to follow his own line of action in a favourable atmosphere, for some of his critics and enemies were no longer there. Asaf Khan Jafar Beg, had died at Burhanpur, Amir-ul-Umra too had breathed his last in the *pargana* of Nihalpur. At his own request Khan-i-Azam had been posted on the Mewar front in 1613 A.D. In 1614 A.D. died Raja Man Singh. Thus during the next two years the Khan Khanan, made strenuous efforts to remove some of the internal drawbacks and prepare the army for joint and concerted action.[1]

[1] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, I, pp. 221-22; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, p. 535, *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, II, p. 521; *Maasir-ul-Umra*, I, pp 56-7;. *Maasir-i-Jahangiri*, (A.U. MS.) pp. 168-174.

The preliminary arrangements for a bigger struggle were completed by the year 1614 A.D. A little before the close of 1613 A.D. when the offensive was opened, dissensions broke out in Malik Ambar's camp of which the Mughals took the fullest advantage. Since long the Mughals were making efforts to purchase the loyalty of the Marathas by offering them gold and lucrative *jagirs* or promising them high ranks. Some of them, in the hope of improving their fortunes conspired to assassinate Malik Ambar. They waited behind an ambush and at an opportunate moment attacked him inflicting a deep wound on his body. Since the injury was slight Malik Ambar miraculously escaped. His attendants overpowered the conspirators, killed some of them and brought Malik Ambar to a safe place. A little later, some of the most influential Maratha nobles like Jado Rao, Babaji Kayath, Uda Ram and some Muslim nobles like Yakut Khan and Adam Khan deserted Malik Ambar and came over to the Mughals. All of them went to the camp of Shah Nawaz Khan at Balapur, where they were welcomed, given money and elephants according to their status and ability. The desertions of the Marathas, Muslims and Abyssinians, upon whom Malik Ambar had so long depended weakened his position and encouraged the Mughal general Khan Khanan to open the offensive in the beginning of the year 1614 A.D. by marching towards the town of Khirki.[1] With a view to assist the Khan Khanan, the emperor once more decided to proceed towards the Deccan. He gave orders to Abdul Karim Mamuri to go to Mandu and prepare a new building for his royal residence there. But before he could actually move towards the Deccan, Shahnawaz Khan depending upon his new allies i.e. the Marathas and the Abyssinians had marched to deliver an attack on Malik Ambar.

The Mughal attack took Malik Ambar by surprise. He fell back and decided to avert the crisis by making an appeal to the rulers of Bijapur and Golkunda to send necessary assistance and enter into an offensive and defensive alliance. Fortunately, they responded to his appeal for they had begun to realise that they could not in the near future pursue an isolationist policy.

[1] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, I, pp. 275, 312; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, pp. 539-40; *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, I, p. 282.

Pro-Mughal attitude was likely to alienate the sympathies of the people of the Deccan and their indifference towards Malik Ambar, the protector and defender of the political, economic and cultural independence of the region might prove even worse still. Ibrahin Adil Shah II therefore sent 20,000 soldiers under the command of Mulla Muhammad Lari and Qutb Shah detached 5000 soldiers under the command of Mir Musa. The arrival of reinforcements from Bijapur and Golkunda strengthened his position to the extent that he decided to stay at Khirki with 40,000 horses and able commanders like Mahaldaar Khan, Danish Khan, Dilawar Khan, Bijili Khan and others to check the advance of the imperial forces. After Shahnawaz Khan had moved beyond Jalna, the Maratha *bargis* of Malik Ambar became active. They started moving round his flanks; harassing him off and on. Shah Nawaz Khan's men repulsed their attacks and drove them away. His advance party cleared the way and the rest of his army thereafter moved speedily towards Khirki. The news of the defeat of his men led Malik Ambar to come out of the capital and make preparations for a pitched battle. He encamped on the grounds of Roshangarh, situated between Khirki and Samvate and arranged his 40,000 men in battle formation.

A little later, Shah Nawaz Khan, also arrived there. He pitched his camp on the opposite side. He too arranged his men; himself commanding the central wing, while the left and right wings were commanded by Raja Man Singh and Khwaja Beg Safvi. The battle started in the afternoon with a volley of fire from the rockets and cannons. Darab Khan with his colleagues, Bir Singh Deo Bundela, Raja Chand, Ali Khan, Jahangir Quli Beg, attacked the vanguard of Malik Ambar's forces. A fierce battle which lasted only for two hours took place. On this occasion the Deccanis failed to stand the Mughal pressure. Very soon they lost confidence and they broke and fled. Malik Ambar accepted the defeat, withdrew from the battlefield but was hotly chased by the imperialists till sun-set. Thereafter, the latter returned to collect the booty. (Feb, 1616 A.D.)

In this battle Malik Ambar suffered heavy losses. A large number of his soldiers were either slain or taken prisoner and those who managed to escape were panic-stricken and

exhausted. His entire park of artillery, elephants, horses and elephants laden with rockets fell into the hands of the Mughals. He also lost some of his best generals like Ambar Bijapuri, Masnad Ali and Bijili Khan. After the battle was over the Adil Shahi and Qutb Shahi forces also withdrew. Malik Ambar in sheer disappointment abandoned Khirki and the new capital which he had established was ravaged, plundered and burnt by the Mughals.[1]

By obtaining this glorious victory over Malik Ambar, the Khan Khanan no doubt retrieved the lost prestige of the Mughals, but Malik Ambar was still far from being crushed. The battle of Roshangarh was a battle without any gains. Not an inch of the Nizam Shahi country was captured or annexed. Nor was the enemy crushed for all time to come. Shortly after the withdrawal of the Mughal forces from Khirki, Malik Ambar reappeared on the scene, reoccupied the abandoned capital and began to rehabilitate his position. Since the stay of Jadav Rao, Babaji Kayath and the other Marathas in the Mughal camp was undesirable and was against his interests, Malik Ambar purchased back their loyalty with the assistance of Ibrahim Adil Shah II.

But how could the deserters be loyal and trustworthy ? Within a short time they became a source of trouble to Malik Ambar. They were secretly contriving to bring about his fall. When Malik Ambar came to know of it, he decided to react against their machinations. He shattered their nefarious designs by imprisoning Adham Khan in the fort of Daultabad and after sometime putting him to death. Baba ji Kayath and Uda Ram made unsuccessful attempts to go to Bijapur. The former was deserted by his followers; while the latter gallantly opposed Malik Ambar's men and put them to flight. But realising that his stay in the Nizam Shahi country would not be safe Uda Ram returned to join the Mughal service.[2]

[1] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, I, pp. 313-4, *Maasir i-Jahangiri*, pp. 229-30; *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, II, pp. 523-4 ; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangir.*, pp. 539-40.

[2] Van Ravestyn, the Dutch traveller, records that, "Malik Ambar's camp was in confusion because the chief officers both Hindu and Muslims, who had been sent against the Mughals rebelled and

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At Ajmer, Jahangir heard about the weak plight of the imperialists in the Deccan, where in spite of the change of the commanders and pouring in fresh reinforcements, the situation showed no signs of improvements. He was now convinced of the incompetency of Prince Parvez and the inability of the Khan Khanan to deal with the enemy.[1] Circumstances

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proposed to set up another king; three days later the rebels submitted but the camp was still disturbed." See Journal of Indian History, p. 142; *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, I, pp. 398-99.

[1] It was generally believed that the Khan Khanan was secretly on friendly terms with Malik Ambar against whom he had been sent twice. Ever since his arrival in the Deccan he had been trying to build up his military reputation by achieving success over the enemy but on account of party politics at the Mughal court he had not been able to gain success in his ventures. This is confirmed by Sir Thomas Roe's account. Sir Thomas Roe on the basis of what he heard from the nobles mentions about the manner in which the enemies of Khan Khanan were working against him at the court and were trying to undermine his position. Roe writes, "The prince who contented to build his honour on the warrs of yhe Deccan which his elder brother had left with disgrace and great Commander Chan Chana did not prosper in (which was a practiser with the Deccanis, from whom he recieved his pension) caused his father to recall Chan Chanan, who refusing to come, desired the king not to send Sultan Coronne to that warr, but one of the youngest sons about fifteen years of age. This Coronne took to heart, but prosecuting his Purpose of the warr, promised to Abdela Chan the command of the army under him by displacing Chan Channa. The king fearing troubles and knowing all the ambitions and factions of this sonne, the discontent of his two elder, the power of Chan Channa, was desirous to accommodate all by accepting Peace and confirming Chan Channa in the government he held and closely to that end wrote a lettre of favour and prposed to send a vest according to the ceremony of reconciliation to Chan Channa. But before he dispatched it hee acquaynted a kinswoeman of his livening in the zereglia of his purpose. She whether false to her frend or out of greatness of hart to see the top of his familye after so many merittes stand on soe fickle termes answered playnly that shee did not beleeve Chan Channan would weare anything sent from the king, knowing his Maiestie hated him and had once or twice offered him poyson, which hee putting in his bosome instead of his mouth had made try all off. The king offered to weare it himself before her for an hower and that shee should write to testefy it. She replyed he would trust neyther of them both with his life, but it hee might live quietly in his command

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demanded a bold decision and a vigorous man to command the situation. By this time Nurjahan's Junta had come into prominence. Prince Khurram an active member of this group who had already displayed his talents on the Mewar front, was now selected to achieve what none had achieved so far. Consequently, Prince Parvez was recalled from the Deccan to make room for his younger brother who in certain respects was superior to him. Jahangir accepted the wishes of the Junta and sent Prince Khurram to the Deccan. He himself moved to Mandu and encamped there to be available for advice and guidance in the forthcoming struggle against Malik Ambar and to watch the course of events.[1]

On October 6th, 1616 A.D. Prince Khurram, left Ajmer with famous generals like Abdullah Khan Firuz Jang, Raja Suraj Singh, Dayanat Khan, and others. By rapid marches, he reached the banks of the Narbada, where he met the Khan Khanan, Khan Jahan Lodi and Mahabat Khan. Without losing time by halting there the prince marched straight to Burhanpur, where he arrived on 6th March, 1617 A.D. Here he married the daughter of Shah Nawaz Khan, who pledged his full support to him. This was a happy beginning for securing unity of action among the imperial officers and commanders. The presence of the emperor near the scene of action, concentration of the Mughal forces on the Deccan front, doubled the enthusiasm and the confidence of the prince and the

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would doe his Maisestie true service. Whereuppon the king altered his purpose and resolved to proceed on the sending sultan Coronne and to countenance his reception would follow after the another armie" See, William Foster, *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of the great Mogol*, II, pp. 279-80.

[1] Sir Thomas Roe writes, "By judgement I gathered that the king would make a countenance that way, as well as to settle by his nearness to his sonne, Sultan Croronne in the warrs of the Decan (to those comminge Chan Channa and other chiefs stood yet averse and it was feared that some troubles would ensue), as alsoe to terrify his enemiyes and to forcę them to some agreement by his approach, which pretended terrible prosecution of the warrs (which are made only by treachery, perury and advantages without one honourable blow on either side) See, *Ibid.*, II, p. 274.

generals who were with him. Prince Khurram then opened negotiations with the rulers of Bijapur and Golkunda and Malik Ambar through reliable and trustworthy messengers like Afzal Khan and Raja Vikramajit. He offered them definite proposals of peace i.e. they must relinquish their right over the territories which they had seized from the Mughals and that they must acknowledge the suzerainty of the Mughal emperor by agreeing to pay regular annual tribute.

The extensive preparations of the Mughals, the presence of large army on the borders of the Deccan and their readiness to march into enemy's country, the rising prestige of prince Khurram, the presence of the emperor at Mandu, unnerved Ibrahim Adil Shah II and Qutb Shah. Recognising discretion to be better part of valour, they succumbed to unprecedented and unexpected pressure. Ibrahim Adil Shah personally waited upon the prince with costly presents in cash and kind. He was honoured with the title, "*farzand*" or son by the Mughal emperor. Qutb Shah did the same and tendered his submission to the Mughal emperor.[1]

The submission of the rulers of Bijapur and Golkunda and the acceptance of the Mughal suzerainty by them completely isolated Malik Ambar. He was much perturbed, had he been so ruthlessly abandoned by the Deccan powers as on this occasion. Never was his position so precarious and never before did he find himself amidst such difficulties. His was an unvincible position. The threat of the Mughal invasion from the one side and condemnable attitude of the Deccani powers place him in between the two walls. Overwhelming odds were now arrayed against him. Uptil now he was always emerged successful even out of the tight corners and desperate circumstances. But in such crises both Adil Shah and Qutb Shah, always rendered their assistance to him. But since they had fallen on their knees before the Mughal emperor how could he expect any support from them ? To add insult to

[1] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, I, pp. 368-87, 388 ; *Iqbalnama-I-Jahangiri*, p. 545 ; *Maasir-ul-Umra*, II, pp. 57-58; *Maasir-i-Jahangiri*, pp. 294-5 ; *Futuhat-i-Adil Shahi* (Marathi translation in *Shiv Charitra Vrita Sangraha*, III, p. 10); William Foster, *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe* pp. 340-41, 359-60 ; *Shiv Kalin Patrasara Sangraha*, I, p. 28.

injury Ibrahim Adil Shah II pressed him to bow before the inevitable. It was sheer helplessness that he was compelled to purchase peace by surrendering the fort of Ahmadnagar together with the districts of Balaghat which he had seized from the Mughals. It was a heavy and humiliating price which he had to pay but the choice lay between annihilation and temporary lease of life. Prudence counselled him to accept the latter alternative in the hope of retrieving the losses at the earliest opportunity. Although he had surrendered some of his recent gains but it did not involve any material change in his position or resources. Right decision at the right moment averted the Mughal invasion. And after the storm had passed away he began to regard the present treaty as a mere scrap of paper.[1]

Evidently this victory was far from absolute and so Prince Khurram started making necessary arrangements for the defence and administration of the Mughal territories in the Deccan. The Khan Khanan was appointed as governor of Berar, Khandesh, and Ahmadnagar. His eldest son Shah Nawaz Khan was stationed in the ceded territory with 12,000 cavalry. The fort of Ahmadnagar was placed in the hands of Khwaja Ali Beg Mirza. Trustworthy officers were appointed to other places. Suitable measures were taken to improve the administration of the provinces. Leaving 30,000 horses, 7000 musketeers in the Deccan, prince Khurram left Burhanpur. He had with him 25000 horse and 2000 gunners and principal officers like, Khan Jahan Lodi, Abdullah Khan and Darab Khan and others. He arrived at Mandu on 12th Oct. 1617 A.D.; where his victory was celebrated with great pomp. Apparently he had won a resounding success but in reality the Mughal position in the Deccan was no better than at the end of 1605 A.D.[2]

In sullen resentment Malik Ambar patiently waited for two years till he found the opportunity to strike at the enemy again. The opportunity arrived in 1618 A.D. when prince Khurram was busy in the siege of Kangra and the Emperor was passing a

[1] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, I, p. 380; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, pp. 545-6; *Maasir-ul-Umra*, I, p. 58. *Maasir-i-Jahangiri* p. 254; De Laet, *A Contemporary Dutch Chronicle of Mughal India*, p. 53.

[2] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, I, pp. 393-5; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*. p. 546; *Maasir-ul-Umra*, I, p. 58; William Foster, *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe*, II, p. 419.

merry time in the valley of Kashmir. The absence of important seasoned Mughal officers from the hub of politics gave an opportunity to their subordinates, posted in the Deccan to indulge in mutual recrimination, dissensions and petty jealousies. Throughout these two years the Mughal camp in the Deccan remained in a state of confusion. Malik Ambar considered it to be just the time to throw up the mask and play his game. Before doing so he decided to enter into close relations with the neighbouring powers. As it was not so easy to wean them away from the Mughals, military action by way of shock treatment was the only method to compel them to regard their treaty with the Mughals as temporary truce. Consequently, he directed his forces towards Bidar and the frontiers of the kingdom of Golkunda. With their frontiers completely exposed to attack, the rulers of Bijapur and Golkunda were left with no other alternative than that of complying with Ambar's wishes by supporting his plans and extending assistance to him so that he might recover his lost territory from the hands of his enemy.[1] After this, he summoned his Maratha *bargis* recruited, 60,000 fresh troops, organised and trained them and delivered a surprise attack on the Mughal territory adjacent to the fort of Ahmadnagar. He conquered all the places through which he passed and in the end compelled the commandant of the fort of Ahmadnagar to retire into the fort. Leaving a section of his troops to besiege the fort Malik Ambar with the main army marched further and once more extended the frontiers up to Berar. In sheer fright the Mughal officers left their posts and went over to Darab Khan, who had succeeded his brother Shah Nawaz Khan to the governorship of Berar. The Maratha *bargis* chased the Mughals from one end to the other. Though two or three pitched battles occurred between them, but the Mughals despite their success could gain nothing, because as soon as the battle was over the Marathas would assemble again and deliver surprise attack on them, reduce them to extremities and disappear. Within three months Malik Ambar captured and occupied all the outposts held by the Mughals. Thus the major portions of Berar and Ahmadnagar passed into his hands. Once more he emerged out with flying

[1] *Basatin-us-Salatin*, p. 273.

banners. His success in hounding out the Mughals to the walls of the fort of Burhanpur was more glorious than that of prince Shahjahan over him.

Malik Ambar now took up his position at Mahkar from where he directed his activities against the Mughals. He harassed them from all sides, plundering their camp and devastating the surrounding country. He also compelled the Mughal officers to withdraw from Balaghat to Balapur through the pass of Roshangarh. The Mughals expected to be safe at Balapur. After assembling there, they decided to lure the Deccanis into open plain and inflict crushing defeat upon them. Accordingly, they moved from Balapur attacked Malik Ambar's army, defeated his followers and plundered his camp. After seizing rich spoils, the Mughals returned to Balapur. While on the way they were again attacked by Ambar's men who had by now assembled and had become quite active. The Maratha *bargis* hotly pursued the Mughals as far as Balapur. It was only after the loss of several hundred men that with great difficulty they managed to reach their camp. Assemblage of the Mughals at Balapur led Malik Ambar to give thought to the proportion of the new threat which had arisen. Hence, Balapur became the target. His activities were so devastating that a large number of the Mughals deserted and joined him. This further strengthened Malik Ambar's position. Emperor Jahangir himself has given a pathetic account of the circumstances in which the Mughals were placed on this occasion. On one occasion Raja Bir Singh Deo and some other officers showed their valour by delivering attack on the Maratha *bargis* dispersing them and capturing Mansur, an Abyssinian commander of Malik Ambar. But even this singular success over the enemy could hardly bring any advantage to them. An alarming position had been created on account of the repeated incursions of the Maratha *bargis*. Scarcity of provisions in the Mughal camp, joined to the loss of hope of speedy relief placed the Mughal officers in position of uncertainty. Forward movement was out of question. The illness of Mirza Rahmandad son of Abdur Rahim Khan Khanan made his brother Darab Khan nervous. The Marathas became more active. The frequency of their raids increased. It was with great difficulty that Darab Khan repulsed them. The death of Mirza Rahman-

dad, left the Mughal camp in a deplorable condition. Now the only choice before Darab Khan was to abandon Balapur and retire to Burhanpur. Consequently, Balapur was abandoned by the Mughal forces and occupied by Malik Ambar's men. During the course of their retreat the Mughals were hotly chased by the Marathas under the leadership of Malik Ambar up to the walls of Burhanpur. In 1620 A.D. he laid siege to the fort of Burhanpur also. While one arm of his forces was busy in conducting the siege the other boldly crossed the Narbada, entered Malwa and Gujarat, plundering, devastating and ravaging the places through which it passed. Certainly it was a good start to bring down the imperial fabric and shatter the Mughal administration. For six months the Mughals were constantly harassed by the Deccanis. At the end of the period arrived the reinforcements from Agra, which provided a little relief to the Mughal officers. Even then their position continued to remain unsteady. By his military skill Malik Ambar had reduced them to sorry plight, struck terror into their hearts by showing the superiority of his Deccani forces, the patriotic feelings of the common people and their zeal for repelling the invaders.

In this manner with the help of his dazzling sword, diplomatic skill and farsightedness Malik Ambar revived the fortunes of the fallen Nizam Shahi family. Once more the Nizam Shahi kingdom with all its former grandeur, magnificence, glory and splendour reappeared on the political map of the Deccan. As regards the man who gave life to it, he was at the height of his power, prestige and authority. His mind revolted against the very idea of acceptance of Mughal suzerainty. Ever since he had thrown away the mask, his ambition began to touch new heights. He had now completed his plan of the expulsion of the Nizam Shahi state and its consolidation on proper lines. He was a person, who could be compared with Mahmud Gawan, Malik Dabir, Shahji Bhonsle or Mir Jumla.

CHAPTER IV

THE SETTING SUN

THE ceaseless activities of Malik Ambar created havoc and great consternation at Burhanpur, where the life of Mughal general was in danger. They had neither the courage to remain in the Deccan nor the resources to fly to the north. Misery and tears formed their lot. The loss of his son Rahmandad, the retreat of Darab Khan from Balapur and the desertions in his ranks compelled the Khan Khanan to bow his head in shame. More than once he appealed to the Mughal emperor to send reinforcements, provisions and money but it always proved to be a far cry from Burhanpur to Kashmir. The fear of the attacks of the Marathas and the difficulties which surrounded him, crushed his enthusiasm and his hopes. At length in one of his letters to emperor Jahangir, he threatened to commit suicide to obtain eternal deliverance. Every day he passed in anxiety and every night in fear of being attacked by the Maratha *bargis*. In his last despatch the master of the sword and pen, the Khan Khanan compared his own position to that of Mirza Aziz Kokah in Gujarat in the reign of Akbar and he pathetically called upon the emperor to save him, as his father had saved his fosterbrother.[1]

The report of Malik Ambar's round of success and of the deplorable condition of the Mughal officers in the Deccan again compelled the emperor to send Shahjahan to retrieve the situation. As on the previous occasion, Shahjahan was accompanied by a galaxy of officers and generals and had at his command a very large army. From Ujjain he sent reinforcements

[1] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, II, pp. 155-57, 188, 190, 206; *Waqiyat-i-Jahangiri* (Elliot and Dowson), VI, p. 377; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, p. 574; *Maasir-ul-Umra*, I, pp. 58-59.

under Abul Hasan, Bairam Beg to Mandu, where the Mughal commander Muhammad Taqi stood in hourly fear of Deccanis. On the receipt of the report that the reinforcements were coming speedily Muhammad Taqi came out of the fort, fell upon the enemy and put them to flight. Subsequently, in conjunction with Abul Hasan, he drove them away to Akbarpur. In this way the Maratha pressure was completely neutralised. Shortly after, arrived the prince on his way to the Deccan. Here he received a letter from the Khan Khanan asking him to stay where he was and not to proceed towards Burhanpur, where he had been couped by the enemy. But the prince rejected the suggestion and fearlessly but carefully planned the offensive. He took every precaution against the unexpected movements of the Deccanis.

He left Mandu on 25th March, 1621 A.D. and marched towards Burhanpur. He divided his forces in the traditional manner; himself commanding the central wing, while the right and left wings and the van were led by Abdullah Khan Firuz Jang, Raja Vikramajit and Abul Hasan. The entire army crossed the Narbada on 14th April 1621 A.D. and the prince reached Burhanpur safely. Here he met the Khan Khanan. But the Deccanis took no notice either of his arrival or of the change which had occurred in the strength of the Mughal garrison in the fort of Burhanpur. They stuck to their respective positions outside the fort. When Shahjahan came to know of it, he held a council to discuss the future plans. Various suggestions were put forward. The Khan Khanan and his supporters advocated postponment of further operations till the end of the rainy season. Discarding the cowardly suggestion the prince who stood for swift action decided to take the enemy by surprise. In fact he never was in favour of allowing the enemy to take advantage of hesitation and thereby strengthen their position. Moreover, that was the only way of exploiting the superiority of his numbers. To strengthen and safeguard his position the prince ordered that those *jagirdars* whose lands had been seized by Malik Ambar should raise levies and place them at his disposal.

Every detail of the plan was worked out with meticulous care and elaborate instructions were given to the commanders. Thereafter Shahjahan gave orders to his soldiers to advance.

The vast assemblage of the Mughal soldiery marched through Balaghat towards Khirki. Yakut Khan, the Abyssinian commander following the instructions of Malik Ambar, constantly attacked the rear of the Mughal army and engaged the Mughals in fighting again and again. After reverses he would assemble his men again and repeat his activities. This retarded the progress of the army but it could not be totally stopped. In sheer desperation Malik Ambar abandoned Khirki, the capital of the Nizam Shah, removed Burhan Nizam Shah III to Daultabad. And when he found it impossible to check the Mughal advance he too withdrew to Daultabad and took up his position outside the fort. Thus the new capital Khirki again passed into the hands of the Mughals. It was subjected to barbarous vandalism.

The occupation of the town of Khirki provided a base to the prince for his further operations against Malik Ambar. In order to give him no quarter he left Khirki on 15th May 1621 A.D., and marched towards Daultabad. On the way the imperial forces were subjected to repeated surprise attacks which exhausted their patience, broke their morale so that prince Shahjahan had to abandon the idea of capturing the fort of Daultabad. He now turned towards the fort of Ahmadnagar, which had been closely invested by the Deccanis.

Thus fighting their way the Mughals moved on to find themselves caught in a net. They had pushed too far into the Nizam Shahi country and their retreat had been cut off by Malik Ambar's men. The weather was tiresome. The rainy season was approaching fast. To create a diversion for Malik Ambar, Shajahan sent Muhammad Taqi to recover Berar and Khandesh. He succeeded in driving away the Deccanis from those provinces. But even this did not improve the position of the imperialists in Balaghat, where the Marathas made their reappearance again. Fortunately, Muhammad Taqi quickly occupied all the strategic points in that region and for a little while restored the line of communication. His further advance was only a question of time. To check it Malik Ambar sent Atish Khan but he was defeated and put to flight by Muhammad Taqi.

Despite this, the pressure of Malik Ambar's men continued to increase on Ahmadnagar. To relieve the Mughal garrison under Khanjar Khan, Shanjahan resorted to another devise.

He sent his forces towards Nasik and Sangamnir to check the Marathas from coming from that direction and seize the provisions. But this venture proved to be still born. The Mughals found it difficult to erect a strong wall against the on-flow of the Marathas. On the other hand Shahjahan was perplexed at their increasing numbers and the consequent scarcity of provisions in the imperial camp caused by large scale devastations in the adjoining regions. The spectre of complete starvation and the apprehension of surprise attacks on the Deccanis began to work heavily on his mind. Now, he began to think how to extricate himself from such a situation with dignity and grace.

Malik Ambar too was in no better condition. He could perceive the inferiority of his resources in the struggle against the Mughal empire. He was brave and indefatigable no doubt, but this could not compensate the paucity of numbers at his command. Besides, he was quite familiar with the determined attitude of Shahjahan, who seldom left things half done. The assemblage of large Mughal forces on the Deccan front under the able commandership of prince Shahjahan again compelled the rulers of Bijapur and Golkunda to waver in their attitude towards Malik Ambar. The entire atmosphere became tense. How to avert the storm was the main problem before him. Absolutely in the dark about his enemy's plight, Malik Ambar opened negotiations with Shahjahan for peace. He sent his agents and officers to him with request that, "after this I will not drop the thread of service and loyalty from my hand nor put out my foot beyond orders and will regard whatever tribute and fine be commanded as favour and will send it to the government."[1]

Malik Ambar's representatives met Raja Vikramajit at Patan where he was staying with the main army. He offered to surrender the territories once held by the Mughals in the Deccan but had been wrested by him during the last two years. He also promised him to abandon his right over 14 *Kos* of the adjoining territory and pay Rs. 50,00,000 as indemnity on behalf of the rulers of Bijapur, Golkunda and Ahmadnagar. But the Raja declined to listen to anything until Malik Ambar had

[1] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, II, p. 208.

withdrawn his men from the environs of Ahmadnagar and allowed the convoy of provisions to pass freely to the garrison. Malik Ambar readily accepted these terms. Thereafter peace was concluded on the basis of proposals mentioned above. Being satisfied with his conduct Shahjahan returned to Burhanpur.[1]

The humiliating peace with the Mughals was the outcome of pressure exerted upon Malik Ambar by the rulers of Bijapur and Golkunda. They used him as a safety-valve against the Mughal aggression. They extended and withdrew their support from him as the circumstances demanded. Whenever they found that the Mughal forces were busy elsewhere in the north, they readily supported his enemies and assisted him in driving away the enemy. But whenever they found the situation to be irresistible and their own interests threatened, they felt no shame in withdrawing their support, leaving Malik Ambar to depend upon his meagre resources. In this manner they always played a double game, helping whenever it suited their interests and professing loyalty to the Mughal emperor, whenever it became inevitable for them to do so. Even then an enforced peace like this could not be everlasting. Malik Ambar now understood their game. The present peace made him more resentful towards his neighbours than towards the Mughals.

While Malik Ambar in his loyalty for the Nizam Shahi cause was struggling against the Mughals the Marathas many a time wantonly changed sides. They sold themselves to the highest bidder. Desertions on their part became a regular feature. It gave the opportunity to bargain and improve their lot. Thus a large number of Maratha chieftains attained high ranks and positions in the Mughal and Nizam Shahi service. In due course, they grew jealous of each other. The division of the community between Jadhavas and Bhonsles, divided the loyalties of individual Maratha leaders. Their personal feuds proved to be running sore to the integrity of the kingdom. In 1622 A.D. an event, which took place at the Nizam Shahi court symbolised

[1] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, II, p. 208; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, pp. 575-6; *Maasir-i-Jahangiri*, p. 205; *Shiv Kalin Patrsara Sangraha*, I. p. 35.

a new development, which provided another opportunity to the Mughals to aggrandise themselves in the Deccan. One day at the close of the audience, an elephant of a noble, Khandegale got out of control and trampled several men. This incident caused great confusion. Jadhav Rao's son Dattaji ran towards the elephant to control it but misunderstanding his noble intentions, Vithoji's son Shambhuji, Kheloji, and Shahji Bhonsle too ran to save their friend Khandegale from the hands of their erstwhile enemy Dattaji. The rivalry between the Jadhav's and Bhonsle took an ugly turn. In the scuffle which followed Dattaji son of Jadhav Rao was killed by the Bhonsles. Jadhav Rao who was standing there moved with a vengeance, killed Shambhuji and wounded his son-in-law Shahji. When Burhan Nizam Shah III learnt about this gruesome tragedy and open conflict between the two parties, he arrived on the scene, and separated the two combatants. Henceforward, he developed a disliking for the Jadhavas. Being disgusted with the arrogant and intriguing nature of Jadhav Rao, Burhan Nizam Shah decided to oust him with the help of Bhonsles, who were more loyal to the Nizam Jadhav Rao with all his adherents left the fort of Daultabad and joined the Mughal service. He was welcomed and given the *mansab* of 24000 *Zat* and 15000 *Sawar*. His relatives who had accompanied him were also elevated to high position. Their desertion was a serious loss to Malik Ambar, for they knew the weak points of the Nizam Shahi government, which they did not fail to reveal to their new masters. Those who went over to the Mughals not only abandoned the cause of the Nizam Shahis but also put the freedom of their country at stake.[1]

Shahjahan's relations with Nurjahan between 1622-23 A.D. created unprecedented crisis in the Mughal empire. Under pressure of circumstances Shahjahan raised the standard of revolt. Driven from the north by the imperial forces, he arrived on the borders of the Deccan. On 10th September, 1623 A.D.

[1] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, II, p. 218; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, p. 578; *Shiv Bharat*, Chapter IV, Sloka, 1-3; Duff, *A History of the Marathas*, I, p. 96; William Foster, *English Factories in India 1618-21*, pp. 330-3; De Laet, *A Contemporary Dutch Chronicle of Mughal India*, pp. 57, 65-66.

he crossed the river Tapti and appeared in the same region where he had dictated commands to the nobles and officers, where he twice humbled the pride of Malik Ambar and compelled the rulers of the Deccan to accept the Mughal suzerainty. But now his fortune was in eclipse and he was compelled to beg for assistance from those very persons whose dreams he had shattered. This was just a tragic irony of fate. Driven to despair and being hotly pursued by the imperial forces he had to come to the Deccan in search of safety. He sent Afzal Khan to Malik Ambar with an elephant, jewelled sword and a horse as gift and with the request to extend to him necessary assistance. But Malik Ambar was not in a mood to listen to such requests. Nor did he wish to take a hasty decision on the question of affording relief to the rebel of the Mughal empire, especially at a time when the Mughal forces were pursuing him closely.

Even before the arrival of Afzal Khan at the Nizam Shahi court, Malik Ambar like an astute politician had ascertained the attitude of other Deccani powers towards the rebel prince. Therefore when Afzal Khan came to him, delivered the message of Shahjahan and laid the presents before him, Malik Ambar refused to accept them. He frankly told Afzal Khan that he was a servant of Adil Shah, who was at present the head of those in power in the Deccan; he should go first to him and explain what he desired. If agreed, his slave would ally himself to obey him and in that case he would take whatever was sent, otherwise not. In this manner Malik Ambar behaved courteously and cautiously towards Afzal Khan without losing the goodwill of the prince or courting the animosity of the Mughal emperor or of his allies i.e. the rulers of Bijapur and Golkunda. How could he forget the past. Twice he had been humiliated by the same prince ; twice had his master been deprived of the territory which he had seized and recovered for him. Besides, he was the last man to court disaster at the hands of the large imperial forces which were moving fast at the heels of the fugitive prince Shahjahan, under the leadership of Mahabat Khan. Extending help to one meant courting the animosity of the other. The observance of neutrality was the best course. At the same time he had it in his mind that he had to settle his accounts with

Ibrahim Adil Shah II, who had twice let him down by exerting pressure upon him to conclude peace with the Mughals and surrender the territory of Balaghat and the fort of Ahmadnagar. He needed the help of the Mughals for attaining these objectives. This explains his conduct on this occasion.

Afzal Khan, thereafter went to Bijapur in the hope of getting some help. But Ibrahim Adil Shah's behaviour was more painful. He detained him outside the city on various pretexts and made excuses for postponing audience. In the end he accepted the presents and expressed his inability to extend any help. Afzal Khan also visited the Qutb Shahi court. There he fared much better. He secured from the Qutb Shah a promise for safe passage and nominal assistance. He returned to explain to his master Shahjahan, the conduct of the Deccani rulers. In despair Shahjahan left the Deccan to try once more his fortunes in the east.[1] Shortly after his departure, Prince Parvez and Mahabat Khan also left Deccan to pursue and overtake him. Malik Ambar now saw that the storm had passed away.

As Ahmadnagar and Bijapur were contiguous states, frequent disputes always occurred between them for the possession of fertile tracts of Sholapur and its dependencies. While the Nizam Shahis were busy in repelling the Mughal attacks from 1600-1603 A.D. Ibrahim Adil Shah II, seized the opportunity and captured the fort of Sholapur and occupied its dependencies. The process of aggrandisement once began continued unabated. But the rise of Malik Ambar to power and his unrelenting efforts for the revival of the fortunes of the fallen dynasty and his success in hurling back the Mughal might gave a set-back to the expansionist policy of Ibrahim Adil Shah II. But he could not restrain his ambitions. Inevitably he came into conflict with Malik Ambar, whose one consuming passion was to recover the lost territories. But he kept quiet for sometime and did not give any indication to the Adil Shah that he was against him. So long as Parenda remained the capital of the Nizam Shahis, there was little chance for Ibrahim

[1] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, II, p. 290; *Shiva Kalin Patrasara Sangraha*, I, documents no. 175, 186, 192, 193, 194; *Maasir-i-Jahangir*, pp. 322, 326; De Laet, *A Contemporary Dutch Chronicle of Mughal India*, pp. 57, 65-67.

Adil Shah to push the frontiers of his kingdom northward. But the transfer of the capital from Parenda to Junnar, to Daultabad and then to Khirki and the concentration of the Nizam Shahi forces against the Mughals whetted the appetite of Ibrahim Adil Shah again. Some of the Nizam Shahi nobles like, Farhad Khan and others by now had deserted the Nizam Shahi cause and had gone over to the Adil Shah, whom they persuaded to move further. They were interested in the plan because they hoped that after its successful execution they would be able to enjoy possession of independent or semi-independent regions. In short, it was the question of expansion which brought Ibrahim Adil Shah on conflict with Malik Ambar. But at the same time whenever there was any danger of the Mughal advance towards the Deccan, Ibrahim Adil Shah and Qutb Shah ever failed to cooperate with each other in offering resistance and in checking the forward movements of the enemy. In fact the safety of the Adil Shahi kingdom depended upon the survival of the Nizam Shahi kingdom, a fact which was always kept in mind by Ibrahim Adil Shah II.

But tension always remained on both sides of the border. When Mahabat Khan arrived in the Deccan in connection with the suppression of Shahjahan's rebellion, both Ibrahim Adil Shah and Malik Ambar competed to gain his good-will and secure his assistance in the event of the outbreak of their old disputes. In his desire to obtain Mughal alliance each offered better terms than the other. Malik Ambar sent through Ali Sher a letter to Mahabat Khan offering to wait upon him personally at Dewalgaon and to send his eldest son to the imperial court to be admitted into imperial favour and bear everlasting fidelity and devotion. Likewise Adil Shah offered homage and promised to send contingent of 5000 cavalry under Mulla Muhammad Lari for permanent Mughal service, "as the price of Mughal support." But Mahabat Khan kept both of them in suspense until Shahjahan had left the Deccan. This he did only with the intention of getting the support and cooperation of both in dealing with the rebel prince. Had he decided the question in favour of one, the other would have certainly gone to assist the rebel prince Shahjahan, which itself would have created an awkward situation for him. Mahabat Khan succeeded in his scheme and just after the departure of

Shahjahan, he decided to take up the cause of Ibrahim Adil Shah II. The Mughal-Adil Shahi alliance was to help the Mughals in two ways; firstly, they could safely move to Burhanpur with the assistance of the Adil Shahis and secondly the two powers could effectively suppress Malik Ambar and thereby safeguard the Mughal position in the Deccan. In other words, a well planned offensive against Malik Ambar came into existence.

Shortly after, in compliance of the terms of the pact, Ibrahim Adil Shah II sent a contingent of 5000 troops under Mulla Muhammad Lari to escort the Mughals to Burhanpur. Now, Malik Ambar became sure of the close alliance between Ibrahim Adil Shah and the Mughals. Without wasting any time he left Khirki, removed the Nizam Shahi family to Daultabad and himself with a large army moved towards Qandhar, on the borders of the Qutb Shahi kingdom, with the intention of realising subsidy from Qutb Shah and entering into close alliance with him. Then he turned towards Bidar, which had been in the possession of Ibrahim Adil Shah ever since 1619 A.D. He captured and occupied it. He took the Bijapuri forces by surprise, attacked and routed them completely. He advanced further and plundered the city of Nauraspur. After seizing much booty, Malik Ambar marched towards Bijapur, plundering and devastating the places through which he passed. Being unable to fight him in open Ibrahim Adil Shah II shut himself in the fort of Bijapur. Malik Ambar moved a little further and laid siege to the fort of Bijapur. Pressed by the enemy the Adil Shah sent urgent messages to Mulla Muhammad Lari to hasten from Burhanpur and requested Sarbuland Rai, the commandant of the fort of Burhanpur to sent him assistance immediately. After receiving three lacs of *huns* from Mulla Muhammad Lari and an order from Mahabat Khan, Sarbuland Rai gave permission to the Adil Shahi forces to return. Having arranged for the protection of the Mughal possession in the Deccan, Sarbuland Rai despatched a Mughal contingent for the assistance of the Adil Shah. The movements of the combined forces of Bijapur and the Mughals under the command of Mulla Muhammad Lari alarmed Malik Ambar. He asked the Mughals to stand aloof and let him settle his accounts with the Adil Shah. But the Mughal officers paid no heed to his appeal and remons-

trances. They continued to march until they reached the frontiers of Bijapur. Upon their arrival Malik Ambar raised the siege retreated north-ward but was hotly pursued by the allies. He crossed the Bhima at Taligaon and then was forced to take up his position at Bhatwadi, ten miles from Ahmadnagar. Here the rival parties arrayed their forces and fought a contested battle in which Malik Ambar inflicted a crushing defeat upon the allied army. On this occasion he was supported by a large number of Marathas like, Shahji, Sharfoji, Maloji, Parsoji, Mambaji, Nagoji, Trimbakji, Hambir Rao, Madhji, Nar Singh Raj, Ballela tripul, Vithal Raj, Dattaji, Naghath, Nar Singh Pingle, Sunder Jagdev, and many others.[1] This was the last great battle which fought with the help of the Marathas. His success in the battle broke the Mughal-Adil Shahi coalition, which had aimed at the annihilation of the Nizam Shahi kingdom. The battle if on one hand saved the Nizam Shahi kingdom on the other it raised the prestige of Malik Ambar, increased his confidence and humbled the pride of the Mughal and Adil Shahi forces. Once more it revealed the superiority of Malik Ambar's military tactics and his unique skill as commander and general. It is true that the triumph at Bhatvadi did not bring any political gain to him still his achievement on this occasion could be easily compared with those of Rana Pratap in the battle of Haldighati or of Sher Khan in the battle of Surajgarh.

During the contest, the Adil Shahi general Mulla Muhammad Lari lost his life. Laskar Khan, the Mughal commander and other leaders were made captive and had to pass the rest days of their lives in the fort of Daultabad. Mahabat Khan's plan to bring about the end of Malik Ambar's powers, with the help of Ibrahim Adil Shah II fell flatly on the ground. It was sad commentary on his diplomatic skill. The news of unexpected defeat of the Mughal-Adil Shahi forces in the battle of Bhatwadi, caused great consternation in the mind of the Mughal officers at Burhanpur. Sarbuland Rai, the Mughal commandant of the fort grew apprehensive of the safety of the Mughal possession in the Deccan. After the battle was over,

[1] *Futhuat-i-Adil Shahi* (B. M.MS.), pp. 289-90 ; *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, p. 595; *Basatin-us-Salatin*, pp. 273-4 ; *Tarikh-i-Shivaji*, p. 76 ; *Shiva Bharata*, Chapter IV, Slokas, 10 and 66.

Malik Ambar with his zeal redoubled started the counter offensive against the Mughals and Bijapuris. He assembled his men, proceeded towards the fort of Ahmadnagar and laid siege to it. He left his men to press the siege and himself proceeded towards Balaghat and captured the entire territory held by the enemy. Thereafter he moved towards Bijapur again. In order to create diversion for the Adil Shahi forces, he attacked the fort of Sholapur and captured it by storming it on 15th June 1625 A.D. After reducing Ibrahim Adil Shah to a miserable plight and shattering his dreams of expanding the Adil Shahi dominions in northerly directions, and humbling his pride Malik Ambar turned towards Burhanpur. He had already sent his general Yakut Khan to invest the fort. Rapid were his movements from one quarter to the other and so were his activities which now covered a larger area than ever before. Once more he had the satisfaction of making himself the master of the entire Nizam Shahi kingdom, excluding the fort of Ahmadnagar. He had completely strangulated the Mughal supremacy in the Deccan. The conquest of the fort of Burhanpur by him would have completed his dream of freeing the country from the Mughal yoke.

While he was still struggling hard against the Mughal forces at Ahmadnagar and Burhanpur the rebel prince Shahjahan after a brief spell of success in Bihar and Bengal was again compelled by the imperial forces to turn towards the Deccan and seek shelter there. When he arrived on the borders of the Deccan he again solicited Malik Ambar's assistance. The latter welcomed him with open arms. At this critical juncture, when his forces were busy in besieging the fort of Burhanpur, the friendship with the fugitive prince who was commanding a large army was of great value. He hoped to complete the work with his assistance and to affirm his loyalty to the future ruler of the Mughal empire. The prince too, found in Malik Ambar a true friend who could check the imperial forces which were closely pursuing him to provide a safe quarter to him. Shahjahan agreed to play the game of his host and sent his men to assist the latter in his efforts to capture the fort. Consequently the combined forces of Shahjahan and Malik Ambar pressed the siege with vigour but the fort was stoutly defended by Sarbuland Rai. The arrival of Mahabat Khan with a large army

compelled Shahjahan and Yakut Khan to withdraw from Burhanpur. A little later Shahjahan tendered his submission to his father. After his friend had withdrawn his support even though the circumstances were quite favourable, Malik Ambar did not deem it proper to persist in pursuing his ambition of conquering the fort of Burhanpur.

Events were moving fast in the north. True that Nurjahan had succeeded in gaining an upper hand of her enemies like Shahjahan and Mahabat Khan, but she could not reassert the imperial authority over the Deccan. As regards Malik Ambar, although events of the north offered him excellent oppotunities to turn out the Mughals from Burhanpur and Ahmadnagar but his old age did not permit him to embark upon such a project. His ceaseless activities, constant campaigning had rendered his physical constitution so weak that he had no more stamina left in him to continue the struggle any further. The cruel hands of death cut short his life on 14th May, 1626 A.D. at the ripe old age of eighty. He was buried at Amarpur or Ambarpur.

Thus passed away a person from the scene of activity, who rose from the dust to the heights of glory and greatness, attained distinctions and saved not only the fallen Nizam Shahi house but also the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkunda from the hands of the Mughals. His name shall always remain associated with the history of the Deccan.

CHAPTER V

RELATIONS WITH THE PORTUGUESE AND ENGLISH

THE last quarter of the 15th century saw the establishment of the Portuguese power on the western coast of India. After settling themselves at various strategic points they began to interfere with the political and economic life of the independent kingdoms of Gujarat, Ahmadnagar and Bijapur. Though in the beginning their activities were mainly confined to trade and commerce, in due course they supplemented them with politics so as to safeguard their interests. Before appreciating fully the relations of Malik Ambar with the Portuguese, it is but essential to survey the latter's position in the Deccan, especially during the early part of the seventeenth century.

In the early medieval period when events were moving fast on the political chess-board of northern India and a tussle was going on between the imperial power of the Delhi Saltanat and the local Indo-Turkish kingdoms a handful of the Portuguese ships touched the western coast and their captains entered the ports with the sole object of establishing commercial relations with indigenous merchants. Realising that there was much scope for trade, they established their factories at Diu, Daman, Chaul, Bassien, Ravandanda, Dabhol, Thana, Carinja, Goa and Cochin etc. With the Portuguese merchants also came the Christian missionaries, with their zeal to propagate their religion and obtain converts. In due course the Portuguese emerged as successful commercial enterprisers and their bishops as successful propagators of Christianity. Their sphere of commercial and religious activity went on increasing until they had completely entrenched themselves on the western coast. The large scale conversions which they had made and the commercial monopoly which they had established, buttressed their position

by the end of the sixteenth century. Throughout this period they sailed out as armed traders and propagators of Christianity to India and the Dan Far East. But it is gratifying to note that if on the one hand concessions were given to them by the native rulers for carrying on their commercial activities, on the other hand, they were never permitted to transgress their limits of growing into a political power on the western coasts of India. Both the kingdoms of Ahmadnagar and Bijapur, demarcated their sphere of influence, safeguarded their privileges by concluding and ratifying the terms of the treaties from time to time. Even then disputes always occurred between them and the rulers of Bijapur and Ahmadnagar. On the question of boundaries, erection of new forts or fortresses, realisation of revenue, compensation and the determination of the extent of autonomy to be granted to the foreigners. Whenever, their proselytising activities were marked by violence and cruelty the Nizam Shahis and Adil Shahis took action against them. In such cases too conflict was always unavoidable. In short, the presence of the Portuguese on the borders of the kingdom of Ahmadnagar and Bijapur and their activities constituted a serious menace to the rulers of these kingdoms. Till 1600 A.D. there were serious differences between the Nizam Shahis and the Portuguese but after this community of their interests and the considerations of safety from the Mughal aggression brought the two closer to each other and led them to depend upon each other. Each of them had come to realise that the conflicts between them result in heavy loss of men and munition and cordiality amongst them strengthened their position against the common enemy.

The changing course of politics in Spain and the declining fortunes of Spanish empire at the close of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century affected the interests of the Portuguese in the east. In 1600 A.D. when the political fabric of the Nizam Shahis was shattered by the Mughals, the Portuguese and the Nizam Shahis, guided by the instincts of self-preservation and protection decided to help each other.[1] There is copious evidence to show that the Portuguese assisted

[1] See, Panduranga Rao Pissurlencar's article, "Extinction of the Nizam Shahis", *Sardesai Commemoration Volume*, p. 27-28.

the Nizam Shahis with men, money and munitions at the time of repelling the Mughal invasions. Needless to mention that the increasing pressure of the Mughals on the Deccan affected the commercial interests of the Portuguese to such an extent that they were left with no other choice than of throwing themselves in the lap of the Deccani powers.

Bearing these facts in mind it became quite clear that the interests of the Portuguese and the Nizam Shahis were indentical at this juncture. No wonder that Malik Ambar and the Portuguese realised in common the necessity of formulating such a foreign policy as would strengthen their respective positions. At the same time both were anxious to use each other as safety-valve against the Mughals, the English and the Dutch. The last two powers had lately entered the Indian waters. They were new competitors in trade and had started extracting commercial privileges from the Mughal emperor. They now seriously threatened the life line of the Portuguese on the western coast of India. The Portuguese looked at the emergence of the English and the Dutch as dangerous as the expansionist policy of the Mughal Emperor.

The first contact of Malik Ambar with the Portuguese seems to have occurred about the year 1601 A.D. This fact is recorded in the following letter of Philip III, the King of Spain to the Viceroy Ayres de Saldanaha, dated 25th Jan, 1601 A.D. The letter records :

> "And though the Conde (de Vidiguira) writes me that Akbar is already an old man, distrusting his eldest son and fearing to be poisoned by him (on account of that) he had stopped the war which he was waging against the kingdom of Malique, yet since that king is very powerful and sagacious and desirous of approaching to the island of Goa, I recommend you to keep your eyes open on his designs and intention to prevent them with necessary remedies."

The contents of this letter bring to light two facts i.e. that by this time Malik Ambar had become quite powerful and strong as to attract the notice of Spanish sovereign. Secondly, that the designs of Malik Ambar and as well as Akbar were pitted against Goa. In 1601 A.D. as the Portuguese apprehended the resumption of the Mughal activities against the Nizam Shahis,

they desired to make Malik Ambar an ally in order to safeguard their interests. This is confirmed by another letter of Philip III, the King of Spain to Ayres de Saldanha, the Portuguese Viceroy at Goa, dated 23rd March 1604 A.D. The letter mentions :

> "that the circumstances of the relations between Akbar and his eldest son as related by you are most suitable for the welfare of that state and since we know the purpose of that king, I wish that the discord between them would last until his death, for after his demise it is understood that war will ensue in all his kingdom. The precaution undertaken by the Malique to defend himself from him as you told me must be appreciated and I thank you for the pains you tell me are taking to induce and incite him to do so."

The last line of the letter is most important. In fact, the Portuguese Viceroy made persistent efforts for taking advantage of the strained relations of Akbar with his son, by befriending Malik Ambar. The feelings of amity and cordiality between the two guarded their respective interests. In 1604 A.D. being confident of the support which he could from the Portuguese, Malik Ambar gave them the right of collecting half of land revenue of Chaul. Instead of exploiting to their advantage the concession so granted the Portuguese officers behaved in high-handed fashion towards the *ryots* who were subjected to rack renting, violence and bloodshed. The gruesome atrocities committed by the Portuguese compelled the *ryots* and the traders to abandon their fields and homes and take refuge at places other than Chaul, Ravandanda and Dabhol or Bassien, which were then in the hands of the Portuguese. When Mansur Khan, a local officer brought this matter to the notice of the Portuguese Captain, the latter readily agreed to return the excess revenue realised by his officers. Thereafter the conditions became normal in that region. Malik Ambar himself gave assurances of safety to the *ryots* and the traders and asked them to return to their villages. In this manner the deserted and desolated country was repopulated.

In 1605 A.D. while Malik Ambar was engaged in his wars against the Mughals, the Portuguese in spite of the orders from the King of Spain, to maintain the friendly relations with Malik

Ambar wrought much havoc near Chaul.[1] Once more they forcibly exacted excess revenue from the peasants, seized the bullocks and seeds and sold them against their wishes, rendering them homeless and leaving them in a miserable condition. Because of their activities trade and commerce came to standstill. Unfortunately, it is no where recorded what action was taken by Malik Ambar to protect the interests of the peasants of Chaul and its vicinity from the future ravages of the Portuguese and how their activities were checked and peace and tranquility was restored in that region. Disgusted at their abnoxious behaviour and brutal conduct, Abdul Karim, the district governor of Chaul, with the assistance of the Dutch fleet of 30 sails advanced and attacked the Portuguese in 1609 A.D. Abdul Karim plundered them and thereafter the combined Dutch and Nizam Shahi fleets attacked and pursued George Henerique, killed him and seized his wife and two daughters.[2]

This act of violence incensed the Portuguese inhabitants of Chaul, who advised Rolin to take revenge. As Rolin had only few men at his command and had no instructions from the Viceroy to commence the war he showed some reluctance. But in the end, he had to comply with their wishes. One night he sent out two officers with sixteen men to fall upon the enemy. These men discovered that the Muslim forces were encamping near the temple of Raneyra. Suddenly they delivered a surprise attack on them, and after killing many of them, they withdrew. At the same time another Portuguese officer Pedro Corenjo started with thirty men and attacked the village of Tal. He mercilessly killed the inhabitants, burnt their houses and sunk two Nizam Shahi vessels at the port of Chaul. After this the Portuguese decided to teach a lesson to Abdul Karim himself. With this object in view Dom Francisco Rolin marched to the

[1] A royal letter dated 6th March 1605 orders Viceroy D. Martin Afonso de Castro "by secret means and without causing suspicion" ..... "to encourage Melik Ambar to defend himself and suggest Idal Khan to help him, so that they might preserve their states and let not the generals of Akbar seize them". See, Panduranga Rao Pissurlencar's article, "Extinction of the Nizam Shahis", *Sardesai Commemoration Volume*, p. 27.

[2] F.C. Danvers, *The Portuguese in India*, II, p. 149-51.

upper Chaul with three hundred and fifty men who were divided into three sections. One section of the army was led by him while the others by Machael de Abrew and Calleyros. These three forces moved from three different directions towards the enemy. Abrew pushed into the narrow street which led to the open space where the Muslims were drawn up in battle array. No sooner did he reach there than the enemy opened fire and killed him. Shortly after, arrived Rolin on the scene to join the battle. He killed a large number of the Muslims and put rest to flight. Thereafter he set fire to the house of Abdul Karim and devastated the surrounding country. Thus a full-fledged war occurred at Chaul between the forces of Malik Ambar under Abdul Karim and the Portuguese. Both sides had made full preparations. Several skirmishes took place in which the Portuguese always gained the upper hand. A little later, the arrival of Dom Francisco de Sotomiyor with the northern fleet strengthened the position of the Portuguese. He left three vessels and the reinforcements for their support. Rolin marched again against the enemy but this time the latter gave him some hard knocks and compelled him to withdraw. The issue remained undecided. But the news of the departure of Khan Jahan Lodi towards the Deccan to bring about the restoration of the imperial prestige there compelled Malik Ambar and the Portuguese to close the chapter of hostilities and open negotiations for peace. Thus once more the pressure of the Mughal forces compelled them to conclude peace.

Between 1609 and 1615 A.D. the Portuguese not only avoided conflicts with Malik Ambar but also remained friendly towards him. The reason for this could be found in the constant movements of the Mughal forces against Malik Ambar so that the latter could hardly find time to fight on the two different fronts. Similarly, the assemblage of the vast Mughal forces in the Deccan had so frightened the Portuguese that in order to safeguard their interests it became quite essential to remain friendly to Malik Ambar. Again, efforts were made by the Portuguese to knit the Deccani powers into a close alliance and thereby present a strong combination against the Mughals. For this purpose they opened negotiations with Ibrahim Adil Shah II and Murtaza Nizam Shah II requesting them to ratify and

confirm the alliance of 1570 A.D.[1] In a letter dated 29th October, 1609 A.D. addressed to the Viceroy Rui Lourenco de Tavora, the king of Portugal wrote that :

> "the Archbishop and the governor of the state wrote me about the conquest of the Deccan which was something to be feared about, for although the Mughal emperor showed himself a friend and was sending a new ambassador (Muqarrab Khan) who was waiting. He believed that his affairs did not mean anything good and from the place where he was and up the walls of my fortress of north there was nothing to oppose him and he only found some resistance from Adil Khan, who had sent some ambassadors to Melik and Cotta Mulk (Qutb Shah), the king of Masulipatam and Venkata Naik (of Ikri) that all of them unite; however they and all the Deccan were in great terror and he the governor had requested them all to defend themselves. And because the latter is of great importance and as you know for the Mughal is powerful king that he should be in the vicinity of the said fortress, he would give them much to do and everything would run great danger. I recommend to you to do all that is possible in order to unite these princes against him, helping them in all that be needful not only to reward them for the good done on the occasion of rebellion but also for the great advantage of the State." However it should be done with such secrecy that the Mughal may not be apprised of it. You should rather humour him with all the possible demonstration to preserve his friendship and understanding so that in case you be forced to declare yourselves for any of the parties it must be that of the neighbouring state."[2]

In another letter dated 11th March, 1611 A.D. the King of Portugal recommends the Portuguese Viceroy Rui Lourenco de Tavora, "to maintain with him (Malik Ambar) friendly intercourse; making him favours that he may be encouraged against the Mughal."[3]

[1] See, Panduranga Rao Pissurlenkar's article, "The extinction of the Nizam Shahis", *Sardesai Commemoration Volume*, p. 29.

[2] *Ibid*.

[3] *Ibid*.

In spite of these friendly professions, minor incidents continued to occur, which very often marred the cordial relations between the two parties. For instance, trouble arose at Chaul in 1612-13 A.D. which for a little while threatened to disrupt the peace existing between the Portuguese and Malik Ambar. The *thanadar* of Chaul with a view to avenging the losses he had sustained at the hands of the Portuguese in the preceding year, hired some Muslims of Karenja and planned to assassinate Balthasar Rebello de Almeida, the Commandant of the fort of Chaul. One night while Balthasar Rebello was taking his dinner, the assassins entered his house, took him by surprise, killed him and his sister and took possession of the fort. A little later, arrived the Portuguese who opened the gates and put all the Muslims to sword. Thereupon Abbas Khan a general of the Nizam Shahi forces with a large army marched in that direction to avenge the death of his coreligionists. The Portuguese were unable to stop him from entering the town, which was subjected to plunder and bloodshed. But while the Nizam Shahis were busy in collecting the booty Simao Rangel with seventeen Portuguese suddenly fell upon them. At the very same time, Ferdinando de Sampayo Cunha also arrived there accompanied by a few Portuguese. He surrounded the enemy, defeated and put every one of them to sword. After this Cunha ravaged the whole country adjacent to the town of Chaul and made three thousand Muslims captive.

This tragic incident enraged Malik Ambar and his master Burhan Nizam Shah III. They were alarmed at the growing power of the Portuguese and therefore decided to keep them under the control by attacking their strongholds at Salsette, Bassien, and Agashi. Somehow the Portuguese got an inkling of his plans. Rui Friera de Andrade, who was cruising off the coast with a squadron, sailed and anchored his ships near a village between Kerenja and Thana. From here he sent some ships to relieve his countrymen at Agashi. Meanwhile Malik Ambar's forces took up their position and laid siege to the fort of Agashi, Manora etc. At Agashi the contest was bitter between the Portuguese and Malik Ambar's forces. Here the Portuguese were attacked by two thousand Muslims and were compelled to take refuge in the monastery of St. Franciso. But the Nizam Shahi soldiers who had opened the siege of Manora

were driven away from there by Friera de Andrade. After saving the fort of Manora, the Portuguese under the leadership of Friera de Andrade marched to relieve their countrymen at Thana, where they had been hard pressed by the Nizam Shahi soldiers. Finding the position of the Nizam Shahi soldiers weak at Agashi, Malik Ambar sent more reinforcements there. The arrival of fresh reinforcements encouraged his men to press the siege with vigour. Had Friera de Andrade not reached there in time, the entire Portuguese garrison would have been put to sword. Friera de Andrade escorted his countrymen safely to Bassien where he was joined by the commandant of that fort and the commanders of Diu fleets.

It has been stated earlier that all the Portuguese possessions were threatened by the forces of Malik Ambar at one and the same time. This obviously had created great difficulties for them and they were left with no other alternative than to be on the defensive. Shortly after his arrival at Bassien Friera de Andrade collected his men, completed preparations and fell upon the local inhabitants who had risen up in arms against the Portuguese. He attacked them and suppressed the commotion created by them. As soon as he found himself free from the threat of the Muslim forces, he was asked to proceed immediately to Daman.

The Portuguese possessions at Daman too had been threatened by the Muslims. The king of Sarceta had sent his troops to drive away the Portuguese inhabitants. Upon his arrival Andrade fell upon the Muslim forces and put many of them to death. The arrival of the Portuguese reinforcements from Tarapore further relieved the situation. It may be noted that Friera de Andrade always acted promptly and saved the Portuguese possessions at Agashi, Manora, Thana, Bassien, and Daman etc. otherwise the Portuguese would have sustained heavy losses. Their entire trade during these years remained paralysed. A decisive set-back had been given to their position by the Nizam Shahi forces which had been so ably organised and arranged by Malik Ambar. The Portuguese now realised the mistakes they had committed in the past. To bring about improvement in the situation and to restore normal conditions they decided to come to a sort of truce with Malik Ambar. Once more the considerations of safety and their weak position

compelled them to take this step. As regards Malik Ambar he needed a respite so as to face the Mughals and their attacks. It may be noted that it was because of high-handedness of the corrupt Portuguese officers that there was occasional conflict with the Nizam Shahis. But Malik Ambar always showed great courage and determination in not allowing them to become powerful and exploit the local traders and the peasants. During the next three years because of the Mughal pressure on the Deccan, Malik Ambar and the Portuguese decided to live on friendly terms.

Ever since September 1613 A.D. the Portuguese had been making efforts to force Malik Ambar to arrive at a definite settlement with them; but the latter was in no mood to do it. There were valid reasons for it. The Portuguese in the past had never remained true to their words or stood by the terms of the treaty which they had concluded with him. Finding it difficult to bring him round, they sent Azu Naik, a Hindu with letters and presents to the Mughal general in the Deccan, offering to help him in his wars against Malik Ambar. This they did with a view to rouse Malik Ambar's apprehension against the possibility of their alliance with the Mughals, which might induce him to open negotiations for peace. When Azu Naik was returning with the reply of the Mughal general, the vessel in which he was sailing was captured and he himself was made captive by Malik Ambar's men. Thus the plan of the Viceroy, Dom Jeronimo de Azevado fell through. Then he turned towards Ibrahim Adil Shah II to exert pressure upon Malik Ambar and pursuade him to conclude peace. In this he succeeded, for this is confirmed by his letter dated 31st December, 1614 A.D. which he wrote to His Majesty the King of Portugal. He writes :

> "that Adil Shah has continued to send word to me through his ambassador in Goa, about peace with Malik Ambar and insisted that I should depute someone to him to negotiate and conclude peace. I kept on replying to him that for his sake I would accept his advice and put the business in his hands but for that it was necessary that a person should come to Goa on Malik's behalf and sue for peace for it was he who had begun the war. Seeing the duration of the war and the trouble it is giving

to the inhabitants of the north so that it was not brought to the speedy end, they would be completely ruined and exhausted, I thought how could it be remedied and peace be brought about, without letting it be known that this state sought it. Having learnt that Adil Shah has agreed to the marriage of his daughter with the king of Masulipatam, I made haste to send congratulations to him and in order to let him know that I was proceeding towards the north with the fleet, I sent him an ambassador and appointed for that purpose Antnio Montiero Corte Real, not because he was an able man and could fulfill the task with authority and honour but also more particularly because he knew how to deal with these Mohamedans and negotiate with them. I ordered him that he should not in any way refer to the matter of peace with Malik Ambar and in the case he should be spoken about the same when much pressed he should reply that he knew that had much goodwill towards the Adil Shah and would do anything concerning him. He left in early September, was well received and before long they spoke to him about peace. But he told them that he had no authority but they could write to me; they did so and with great insistence they requested me to order immediate cessation of arms. I answered to him that as long as Malik's agent should keep within his own boundaries and commit no act of hostility, I would order that on our side too the same be done and that this suspension of arms should be for a limited time of two to three months and as for peace as I should be going to the north he should be sent to negotiate with me. However, I do not trust at all the friendship of these Mohemedans but I pretend for our condition is not such as to allow us to break off with all of them together. . . . ."[1]

Thus the rulers of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and the Portuguese once more realised the necessity of renewing the terms of the treaty of 1571 A.D. and taking a pledge to remain at peace. This was done at a special ceremony which took place in the

[1] See, Panduranga Rao Pissurlenkar's article, "The Extinction of the Nizam Shahis", *Sardesai Commemoration Volume*, p. 30.

royal palace of Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II at Nauraspur. Here were present Ibrahim Adil Shah, his prime minister and his envoy Shah Nizam Khan, Kashi Pandit, the Nizam Shah Ambassador and Antonio Montiero, the representative of the Portuguese Viceroy. On this occasion Kashi Pandit showed a letter of Malik Ambar bearing his seal and the date 18th September 1615 A.D. which mentioned, "whatever agreement is entered into by Ibrahim Adil Shah and Shah Nawaz Khan with the Viceroy shall be signed by our ambassador Kashi Pandit and will be observed by us". Similarly, Antonio Montiero who had been deputed by the Portuguese Viceroy, to grace the occasion came and showed the order of the Portuguese King, dated 13th May 1615 A.D. which authorised him to sign a treaty on behalf of the Portuguese Crown, promising to observe the terms of it. But as Malik Ambar entertained friendly relations towards the Portuguese an additional condition was incorporated into the treaty and it was laid down that in the Nizam Shahi country the English and the Dutch should be forbidden to settle down and that the Nizam Shah should never extend any assistance to them. Sometime afterwards, Malik Ambar and Wafa Khan, the Adil Shahi envoy incorporated other conditions in the above mentioned treaty viz. that the disputes among the officers and the *ryots* of the Nizam Shah and Adil Shah and the Portuguese be avoided at Ravadanda and Chaul, but if they did occur in connection with the possession of the gardens and the coconut groves, they should be referred to a board of arbitrators composed of two persons, one representing the Nizam Shah and the other the Portuguese Viceroy. The arbitrators were required to scrutinise the claims of the *ryots* on the basis of the legal documents, which if found to be in order, possession was to be restored forthwith to the rightful owner; otherwise the decision with regard to the ownership was to be arrived at after full and complete enquiry and investigation. It was for the board of arbitrators to fix the price of the gardens with the consent of the owners and written deeds be executed in case they are purchased. This document of the treaty was stamped with the seals of Nizam Shah, Malik Ambar, Antonio Montiero and Wafa Khan on 1st January 1617 A.D. When it was laid before the Viceroy and the Captain general of the Portuguese,

Dom Jeronino de Azevado at Goa by Kashi Pandit the Nizam Shahi Ambassador and Shamshir Khan, he ordered his secretary to read out the document to him. After its perusal, the Viceroy willingly signed it and informed those who were present there on this occasion that the terms of the treaty would be observed by the Portuguese so long as Burhan Nizam Shah III and his descendants do not violate them.[1]

Malik Ambar continued to observe the terms of the treaty but at the same time he remained friendly towards the Dutch and the English. In 1617 A.D. Peter Van Den Broecke the Dutch traveller obtained a passport from him ensuring safe passage through the Nizam Shahi country. When he went to meet him Broecke offered him presents, consisting of a Japanese sword and costly Javan crease. Describing this Peter Van Den Broecke writes, "He (Malik Ambar) was highly pleased with the sword but not with the crease because the Devil was engraved on it. He gave it back to me with a *firman* for the wounded (who had been attacked by the Marathas we had left behind. He was gracious towards me and put on me two *shwals* one of gold and other camel's hair which is the greatest honour that can be paid to anyone. Further he offered to give me a guard of soldiers to escort me to Golkunda "Likewise Van Ravestyn another Dutch traveller also speaks of the friendly behaviour of Malik Ambar towards him. He writes, "On reaching the camp of Malik Ambar he presented a letter of introduction to Mir Abdul Fateh who introduced him to Malik Ambar, who talked to us very freely about the sea war between the Portuguese and us and the English. He seemed to be very well inclined towards us and gave us a letter authorising us to cross the frontier. . . . ." It may be recalled that those were the years in which Malik Ambar was quite busy in recuperating the losses by driving the Mughals from Balaghat and Berar. Basides, he was also quite aware of the fact that since the Dutch were not so strong there was no danger from their side. The grant of pass-port for the safe passage through the Nizam Shahi territory did not mean the extension of privileges of settling down in any part of the Nizam Shahi country or the

[1] See, B.G. Tamashkan's article, "Malik Ambar and the Portuguese" Journal of Andhra Historical Research Society, Vol. XVI.

establishment of a Dutch factory on the western coast. Beyond this Malik Ambar did nothing for he had before his eyes the terms of the treaty which he had concluded with the Portuguese and his promise to abide the same.[1]

In 1620 A.D. with the help of the Portuguese, Malik Ambar opened the offensive against the Mughals. He successfully drove them to Burhanpur, laid siege to the fort crossed the Narbada and carried out his daring raids into the Mughal territory. His success in giving this blow to the Mughal prestige may partly be attributed to his friendly relations with the Portuguese. In 1621 A.D. a Portuguese renegade of the Nizam Shahi army plundered an English caravan which was coming to Burhanpur from Agra. When compensation was demanded by the English factor Mr. Jafferies, Malik Ambar consulted his interpreter Josper Gomes, a Portuguese with regard to the amount to be paid as compensation. But when reminded of the terms of the treaty with the Portuguese, Malik Ambar flatly refused either to meet Mr. Jafferies or to pay any compensation to the English. This compelled the English to seize the vessels belonging to the Nizam Shah.

These friendly relations of Malik Ambar with the Portuguese continued up to May 1625 A.D. The same year in the month of June the Portuguese broke the terms of the treaty by resuming their activities at Chaul. Now Malik Ambar was free to deal with them. He attacked the port of Dabhol and took

[1] From the very beginning the Dutch wanted to establish a factory in Gujrat. In 1608 A.D. Dutch merchant named Van Deynsen died in Surat, whereupon the *Sambandar* of Suratte wrote to the Dutch merchants of the western coast to send some one to take possession of the goods worth about £20,000. But no body was sent by them to Suratte. After waiting for some time, the *Samandar* wrote again to the Dutch authorities. This time, Peter Gills Van Ravestyn, offered his services to the Dutch Company and prepared to go to Surat by land and bring back the goods left by Den Deynsen. Along with others Van Ravestyn proceeded from Masilipatam on 8th May, 1615 A.D. to the north. In the way he met Malik Ambar. Two days later he left Malik Ambar's court. Before his departure Mir Abdul Fateh offered the port of Rajapuri situated in between the Portuguese settlements of Chaul and Bassien to the Dutch Company but it seems that the latter did not accept the offer. See, R. D. Wadekar's article, "Melick Ambar from the Dutch sources", Bharat Itihas Samshodhak Mandala, Poona, 1930-32 Vol. 11-12, p. 7.

possession of it. Thereafter the Portuguese concluded a sort of truce with the Nizam Shahi resident of that place (10th June, 1625 A.D.).

Leaving aside the occasional dusty storms which often eclipsed the friendly relations of Malik Ambar with the Portuguese on the whole an atmosphere of cordiality prevailed between them during all these twenty five years. The expansionist designs of the Mughals brought them close to each other and made them realise the importance of the offensive and defensive alliance. Yet at times, whenever the imperial pressure on the Deccan was relaxed, the two did not miss the opportunity of aggrandising themselves, on each other. This made the clash inevitable. Bitter conflicts invariably resulted in serious loss of men, munitions and ships on both the sides. Moreover it did not give them respite to strengthen their respective resources. As regards the Portuguese, their position on the western coast of India was rendered weak on account of the disinterestedness of the Spanish rulers in their colonial enterprises in the east and decline of Spain as naval power. The entrance of the Dutch and the English in the Indian markets intensified competition and gave a setback to the interests of the Portuguese in the east. Add to it, the rash, unpraiseworthy and cruel behaviour of the Portuguese officers towards the Indian peasants and the traders and their own corruptness which explains their anxiety to safeguard their interests against the rising influence of the Dutch, English and the Mughals and also their dependence on the Deccani powers. Thus forced by the circumstances the Portuguese had to remain on friendly terms with Malik Ambar.

Similarly, two factors were responsible for moulding the policy of which Malik Ambar pursued the Portuguese. The first was the safety of the Nizam Shahi dominions from the pressure of the Mughals, and second was his desire that no foreign power be allowed to entrench itself on Indian soil. For the attainment of the first objective Malik Ambar followed the policy of status quo and conciliation towards the Portuguese. As regards the second, he maintained a strong navy, appointed naval officers to remain on the coast to watch the activities of the Portuguese. That is why whenever he came to know of the abnormal behaviour of the Portuguese towards the peasants

and the traders he immediately put his navy into action. The naval power was always backed by the ground forces so that the desired results could be obtained without loss of time. Leaving such periods when he was engaged in bitter struggle with them, Malik Ambar never failed to utilise their services. We do not know as to what he did for putting a stop to the practice of conversion of the Hindus and Muslims to Christianity, but it appears that in the face of other problems these questions did not agitate his mind. His liberal outlook towards them is testified by a large number of Portuguese in his service. Jasper Gomes was his personal interpreter and Mansur Khan, a Portuguese renegade was an able commander in the Nizam Shahi army. Alternating hostility and cordiality marked the relations of Malik Ambar and Portuguese from 1600 to 1626 A.D.

Relations with the English

The first quarter of the seventeenth century also saw the appearance of the English merchants on the western coasts of India. A new commercial power entered the local markets to establish its monopoly over the internal trade and compete with the other European powers. The concessions given to the East India Company by Emperor Jahangir provided the English merchants a requisite base for the maritime and commercial activities. The entrance of the new competitors in the market always effects the internal and foreign trade. The demands of the imported goods disrupts the prices of indigenous commodities and it intensifies the competition between the local and foreign merchants. The scope for profits narrows down. Malik Ambar was not completely ignorant about these things. But he was more interested in the political consequences resulting from the establishment of the new factories on the western coast. The conflict between the English and the Portuguese and between the Dutch and the English was as suicidal to the economic interests of western India as Malik Ambar's conflict with the western powers or with the Mughals. He very early realised that if the Portuguese were thrown out of Indian waters by the Dutch or the English he would be called upon to bear the brunt of the attacks from two sides i.e. of the English

and the Dutch on the western coast and of their ally, Mughals from the north. In that case it would be very difficult for him to revive the fortunes of the fallen Nizam Shahi dynasty or save the country from the hands of the foreigners.

During the first ten years of his regime Malik Ambar built up a strong navy to protect the Nizam Shahi ports from the attacks of the Europeans and for developing trade and commerce. It is very difficult to say as to when he exactly came into direct contact with the English. It appears that after having failed to establish a base at Surat and being turned away from there by Muqarrab Khan and his men in Feb, 1611 A.D. Sir Henery Middleton, the Captain of the English ship "Darling" turned towards the Nizam Shahi port, Dabull.[1] He reached there on the 16th Feb., 1611 and the next day the governor of the town sent his men to welcome him and provide all the facilities to him and his men. A very interesting account of it has been given by Nichlas Downton in his report where he says, "that from Surat Sir Henery Middleton went to Dabull, . . . arriving there the 16th day night; the 17th day morning the governor sent out a boat with some of his people to give our generall the salam and bid him welcome to his port, proffering many courtesies and supply his wants of whatever his country yielded in which we cannot blame his performance for he sent us water by his own servants in their boats reasonably for the money we bought what wheat we needed for making our bread; hens and eggs and divers sort of fruits; we had a good store. Here we find a Portugal factor who endeavoured the most he could wholly to cross our proceedings; the governor understanding by his people who knew us a year before at Moho that not to give us some content (in regard to shipping and travelling abroad) might prove dangerous and not withstanding that they had no merchandise for our present use, yet the governor himself bought some choice coloured cloth, all our bar lead, some red caps, he had also bought and received all our barrells of red lead but disliking this bargain sent it back to our disappointment, also whatever was sold, we had rials (spanish coin) for, to the grief of the Portugal factor to see our people walk in the streets and

[1]See, *Letters of East India Company*, London, 1898, Vol. I, p. 175-6.

kindly recieved by the people; demanded and the principall in the town whether they did not fear God. Since they gave entertainment and provision to us who were their enemies. The governor's answer was that since they dealt with shipping abroad, they stood in doubt of us as they do of Portugals; therefore think fit to use us kindly to the end we do their ships no harm abroad".[1] The contents of this report, thus show, that Malik Ambar and the English had arrived at an understanding that they would not destroy the ships belonging to either party, and secondly, that Malik Ambar would have no objection if the English merchants wist the Nizam Shahi ports in connection with trade and commerce. The same report mentions that the English merchants purchased raw silk and other articles and loaded them on a ship bound for Ormuz[2] and left for Debull on 5th March, 1611. Despite the friendly attitude of the governor of Debull the English merchants found it difficult to establish a base in any of the Nizam Shahi port. The same year one of their ships was detained at Mocha and their men were imprisoned by Regib Aga the governor. Consequently, they were compelled to open negotiations with some of the important Captains of Malabar and Dabull Ships, for securing their release. Malik Ambar the Captain of "Dabull ship" immediately responded, came to their rescue, met Regib Aga and succeeded in obtaining an assurance from him that he would do no harm to the English merchants.[3] Before the formalities could be over, Lawerence Famell along with his men made an unsucessful attempt to effect escape. Instead of punishing him and his men, Regib Aga set them free and allowed them to carry on their trade.[4]

It seems that Malik Ambar was quite conscious of the heavy responsibility which lay on his shoulders. He needed the cooperation of the English in building up a strong navy no doubt but was not prepared to allow them to establish a base in any part of the long coastal region under the control of the

[1] See, *Letters of East India Company*, Vol. I, p. 176.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] See, Lawerence Famell and John William's letter to Sir Henery Middleton, The Generall of the English fleet, "Darling", dated 11th May, 1611, A.D., *Ibid.*, p. 89-90.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 92.

Nizam Shahis. In May 1611 A.D. Sir Henery Middtleton arrived at Dabull to seek commercial concessions from Malik Ambar. By way of friendly gesture, the latter sent hin presents. Sir Henery Middleton not only conveyed his indebtedness to Malik Ambar through Lawerence Famell but also asked him to speak to Regib Aga to allow Malik Ambar to use English ships.[1]

For sometime both the parties continued to reciprocate friendly feelings. In his letter to Sir Henery Middleton wrote, "that every day we recieve kindness from Malik Ambar, Nahuda of the great ship in quality and they ordinarily feedeth you. We mean rice but no flesh therewith . . . . This kind of grain is far dearer than in the time past. "In reply to this letter Sir Henery Middleton wrote, "I percieve you are beholden to Nahuda Meleck Ambar to requisite part thereof I have sent him a good sword blade and another to his Kaihao and for the rest I acknowledge his debtor."[2] The English were not slow to take advantage of this kind of hospitality shown to them. Instead of directly demanding the trading concessions, they preferred to flatter him by their sweet words and tried to convince him that they had no ulterior motives. Malik Ambar believed them and gave permission to Sir Henery Middleton to visit any part of the country or Dabul if he liked.[3] But when

[1] Sir Henery Middleton appearance at Dabull caused anxiety to the merchants of Dabull and Malabar. They sent presents to Lawerence Famell to establish friendship with him and gain the goodwill of the English. In his letter to Sir Henery Middleton, Famell writes, " your departure aboard hath stricken terror into the Dabulls and Malabaris for since our first letter to you the Dabulls had brought us presents viz two shhep, one basket of rice, another great basket of bread with a pan of butter and some green ginger" See, Lawerence Famell's letter to Sir Henery Middleton, dated 13th May 1611; *Ibid.*, p. 93; Also see, Sir Henery Middleton's letter to Mr. Lawerence, dated 15th May, 1611; *Ibid.*, p. 101; also see another letter of Sir Henery Middleton to Mr. Lawerence dated 16th May, 1611-*Ibid*, p. 103.

[2] Sir Henery Middleton's letter to Mr. Lawerence Famell, dated 18th May, 1611; *Ibid.*, p. 109.

[3] "I Malik Ambar being glad to hear of your worship's welfare, salute you. Your letter with a sword blade I have recieved returning you many thanks for youe kindness and will be ready to requite your courtesey upon any accasion if your worship make use of me, whereof

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the English ships tried to enter Dabull with the intention of establishing a factory there by overthrowing the Portuguese, Malik Ambar's navy not only checked them from doing so but blocked their passage and seized their ships. This incident led Famell Lawerence and John Williams to write to Sir Henery Middleton, "that we know that Melick Ambar did speak more earnestly and boldly in our cause".[1] yet he was not prepared to allow the English to anchor their ships at Dabull. It was suggested by some of the English Captains like Nicholas Downton that efforts should now be made to establish bases on the western coast so as to humble Malik Ambar's pride.[2] Convinced of the fact that there was a close alliance between Malik Ambar and the Portuguese, and that they would not allow them to establish their factories on the western coast, the English concentrated their activities at Surat. During the next few years they succeeded in gaining commercial privileges from the Mughal Emperor.

In order to crush the common enemies, i.e. Malik Ambar and the Portuguese, Muqarrab Khan, the Viceroy of Surat, started from Surat with large number of English ships and laid siege to the forts of Chaul, Bassien, Dandarajpuri and

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I pray doubt not, what hath been sent both into your worship and people ashore was not with expectation of recompense but in token of good will partly to manifest my love I bear you I doubt not but within this eight days answer will come from Basha with order for your people's deliverence. If any letter will please you for any part of India you propose to go into, you may command me as also I desire the like from you for my safe passage if I should meet with any of your countrymen in my way. I dare warrant you, if you would go into Dabull your entertainment would be friendly and embracement of trade gradually accepted . . . . " See, Malik Ambar's letter to Sir Henery Middleston, dated 19th May, 1611- Letters of East India Company, Vol. I, p. 113; also see, Lawerence's letter to Sir Henery Middleton, dated 22nd May, 1611- affirming the friendly attitude of Malik Ambar, *Ibid.*, p. 120. Also see Lawerence Famell's another letter to Sir Henery Middleton, dated 24th May, 1611, in which he informs the latter that "Governor and Nahuda are at difference the Nahudac telling him plainly of his injurious dealings towards us so that he will not suffer him . . . See, *Ibid.*, p. 124.

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 155-56.

other Nizam Shahi ports.[1] Since Malik Ambar was busy in fighting with the Mughals, the Portuguese made efforts for a reconciliation with Muqarrab Khan. They offered restitution for the loss of the Mughal ships and goods but the latter turned down all such requests.[2] Upon this Malik Ambar set his naval and land forces in motion to defend his possessions.[3] The Portuguese helped the Nizam Shahi forces and by January 1615 A.D. the besiegers were compelled to withdraw. Thereafter Malik Ambar established his hold over Chaul. In this manner despite their combined efforts, the English and the Mughal forces failed to win against either the Portuguese or Malik Ambar. The community of interests on the one hand had brought the Mughals and the English, Portuguese and Malik Ambar closer.

From 1615 onwards the English depended more upon the Mughals for commercial concessions than upon the Deccani powers. The successful mission of Sir Thomas Roe provided them a base at Surat, from where they could move to the distant markets of northern India in connection with trade and commerce, As regards Malik Ambar he rightly perceived that his interests could only be safeguarded by the Portuguese than by the English who were favoured and helped by the Mughals. During the next five years since he remained busy in continuing the struggle against the Mughals he did not come in direct touch or clash with the English.[4] Still it was an open secret that the Policy of "protection" which was followed by the

[1] See, William Edward's letter to East India Company, dated Dec. 1615 A.D., *Letters of the East India Company*, Vol. I, p. 149-50.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 150-51.

[3] See, John Crowther's letter to the Governor and Committees of East India Company, dated 26th Dec, 1614, *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 239.

[4] In Jan 1617 a Persian with whom Fathplace had sold goods worth Rs. 1700 at Agra fled from there in the night and took refuge in Malik Ambar's camp in the Deccan. Sir Thomas Roe, learnt of this from a letter sent to him from Burhanpur. Consequently Sprage was sent to the Deccan. He met Malik Ambar on 18th June 1617 and requested him to assist him in finding out that man. A search was made and it was discovered that the person had fled to Bijapur. While Sprage was still in Malik's camp, the latter asked him to supply English cloth and swords to his soldiers. See, William Foster, *English Factories in India*, Vol. II, p. 403.

Mughal Emperor ran counter to his interests and hit hard the economy of the region under his control. Malik Ambar, never wished to give the English merchants a base of the on the western coast or to allow them to establish their supremacy in Indian waters. Malik Ambar's hostile attitude towards them is reflected in his attempts to eliminate their influence after 1619 A.D. In November 1620 A.D. it was decided by the English factors at Surat to send back Hart and Roebeck and other English ships to England, with Persian silk and other goods, which they had purchased in Gujarat and those which they had expected from Agra.[1] This was the time when Malik Ambar had opened his offensive against the Mughals by invading Khandesh. besieging the fort of Burhanpur and by pushing the light Maratha cavalry across the river Tapti. His forces blocked the passage from Agra to Surat.[2] With the result that the goods expected from Agra and Burhanpur could not reach Surat in time to be loaded on the English ships. The English factors passed their time in anxiety at Mandu and in the hope that the Mughal forces would drive away the Deccanis and make the passage safe. About this time at Surat, President Kerridge held consultations with Gules James and Joseph Hopkinson on 25th November to find out the way to solve this problem. It was debated as to whether the caravan should be ordered to wait at Mandu or should be instructed to move through the Vindhyas to Surat.[3] The latter route was not regarded safe and therefore it was decided to adopt the former one.[4] The situation was again discussed on 29th November, 1620. The English had to choose between abandoning the goods or loosing the chance of despatching them to England that season. As a safer course, it was decided to send Hutchinson to the commander of the Deccani forces for obtaining assurances of safe passage.[5] Hutchinson succeeded in his mission. Consequently the caravan was ordered to resume its

[1] See, William Foster, *English Factories in India 1618-21*, Oxford, 1906, p. XXX, 207, 210, 215, 217.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 207, 210, 211, 257.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 210.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] William Foster, *English Factories in India*, p. 210-11.

march. Edward Heynes and Hutchinson were entrusted with the duty of transporting the goods in the parts from Mandu to Burhanpur and from Asirgarh to Surat.[1] At the same time instructions were given to them that if no safe passage is found than all the goods should be detained at Mandu until conditions become normal for their transportation. Secondly, if Heynes fails to procure a pass from Malik Ambar, Hutchinson shall endeavour to persuade Raja Limgee to allow the English goods to pass through his territory. Heynes succeeded in his mission and placing reliance in Malik Ambar's words, he along with Hutchinson moved from Mandu. But some how or the other Malik Ambar's forces attacked the English caravan and seized the entire goods on 16th March, 1621.[2] The English suffered great loss on this occasion. They realised that without a strong navy on the western coast there cannot be safety to their internal trade nor could any compensation be had from the Nizam Shah for the losses.

The same day (16th March 1621) it was resolved by the Surat Council to seek restitution from Malik Ambar and his confederates. When the demand was presented it was turned down by him. In fact there was no justification on the part of the English factors to repeat the demands of restitution or compensation for Malik Ambar had given them the permission to carry their goods through his territory and it was not his responsibility to see that the English goods reach its destination safely. However when the English factors, demanded restitution or compensation Malik Ambar turned down their demands. This was regarded as discourtsey towards the English nation. The Surat Council once more decided to press for the demands for the following reasons, (i) that if one ship was sent to Chaul, it is very likely that it may not succeed in seizing the Nizam Shahi ships (ii) that since the Dutch were busy elsewhere it was difficult to procure their assistance in the venture (iii) by using the English vessels at Diu, the Company could neither make much profits nor could get compensation for the loss. (iv) even if surprise attacks were delivered on the Nizam Shahi ships at Chaul, not much gain would be had by the Company (v) on

[1] William Foster, *English Factories in India*, p. 211.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 217, 218, 240, 243, 244, 257, 259.

the other hand during this period in expectation of gains the English ships at Surat would have to keep on waiting. Therefore in the ensuing months the English factors at Surat could neither get compensation despite their efforts nor could deliver surprise attacks on the Nizam Shahi ships at Chaul. In other words no definite decision was taken by them and hence their activities against Malik Ambar remained suspended.

With a view to redress their grievances and demand compensation, the three English ships, Hart, Roebeck and the Hope of London sailed from the Red Sea under Blyth on 15th August, 1621 to keep watch over Chaul and Dabhol, the chief ports of the Nizam Shahi and Adil Shahi kingdoms.[1] After maintaining the blockade for more than a month, experiencing shocks and jolts of severe storms while on their way to Surat, they captured some of the Nizam Shahi ships by way of compensation. In fact Blyth, the English Captain did not know that negotiations were going on with Malik Ambar on compensation and that the latter had agreed to consider the demand.[2] Nor did he know that Mr. Jefferies accompanied by Nicholas Cripse had already reached Chaul for this purpose.

Shortly after their arrival at Chaul in September 1621, Mr. Jefferies opened negotiations with Malik Ambar for the compensation. It was here that he had come to know through a letter of Mr. Kerridge that Malik Ambar had agreed to give compensation for the foresaid loss. Thus his visit to Malik Ambar was important in the sense that it gave him an opportunity to gain his confidence for gaining rewards in future. Even then his success appeared to be dubious for the very reason that Malik Ambar still favoured the Portuguese. The abstracts of the letters from Mr. Jefferies to the Surat factors dated Oct-Nov., 1621 throw light on this meeting; what transpired between the two and on Malik Ambar's attitude towards the English.

The first letter of Mr. Jefferies mentions, "Indians make some unfortunate dais for travils. They remaine two dais in the citie of Junneare (Junnar). They arrived within two miles of

[1] See, William Foster, *English Factories in India 1618-21*, p. XXXI, pp. 243, 244, 246, 248.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. XXXII, 272, 287, 289.

Daultabad, 25th October beeing the court of Melick. A hundred and fifty men, horse and foote sent from Melick Ambar who desires their creapire into him. They came to Nockrie and were admitted to the presence of Melick Ambar. Melicke Ambar demanded the cause of the cominge by a Portugall renegado, his interpreter. Jefferies makes answere to the Portuguese. He delivereth the counsells letter to Melicke. Melicke's interpreter began like a school boy to spell the letter. Melicke takes the letter from the Portugall and gives it to his Maltas. Melicke demands the losses we sustained upon the Caphilla. He answered six leques of ruppees; the prime cost of the goods 2,00,000 rupies. They are dismist from the presence of the Melicke. They repaire to their tent and Melicke sends them six sheepe, rice, meat, meale etc. for their provisions. They returne. The Melicke thanks for their good cheer. They are sent for by Melicke and carries a present with them of nine yards of scarlett. Melicke's porter denies Robert lea entrance. Melicke consults with Josper Gomes, a Portugal renegado. Mr. Jefferies desires admittance for his interpreter. They tell Melicke of their present. He denies to recieve it until differences were ended. Melicke demanded whether differences in their countrie between man and man were governed by conscience and justice; which Mr. Jefferies replie. Melicke's second demand howe could they require the spoiles of Caphilla of him with answer to it. Jefferies first reason, in ragrd to the distrust of Yacute Khan armie he solicited a warrant for passage of goods. Mr. Lea now interpreteth the fearinge the Portugalls dishonestie in that office. Mogolls enemies to the Deccans and the friends of the English. The Melicke laid the fault of robbing the Caffila upon ours because they would not take such wais as they were counselled. Second reason, Melicke's promise. "In a letter to the commander of our fleet, dated 22nd September at Chale hee promiseth instant satisfaction. Jefferies saith that in conscience and justice, Melicke out (ought) to make satisfaction. The prime cost of the losse amount to 210,000 rupies. Melicke's answer to Jefferies second reason; in his letter he promised to doe what should be justice but he found it not just to paie our losses. Melicke asks if the English be men of conscience to come to him for monie and yett robb his shippe. Melicke much displeased for taking his shipp. He valued hir ten laques, but seemed not to

regard hir but said they might keep hir expect no further saisfaction from him. Hee desires the Melicke's answere in writing. Ibrahim Adilshaw, the king of Vizapore suspected to have plotted treason against Melicke and to have drowned him in a tanke. Melicke caused the vizir to be disarmed his wives and goods taken from him and hee sent disgracefully to prison. Jefferies commanded to be gone. Melicke gives him bettle in token of his love and promiseth hee shall be used with all courtisie. Cogee Daud (Khwaja Daud) inviteth him to his tent and telleth him that a junke of Dabull belonging to Ibrahim Adleshaw was robbed and eleven of hir men killed by the two English ships. Jefferies excuseth the companies servants from cruelty and robbing the juncke. None knowne in Indian seas but English and Portuguese. The Hollanders, French and Danes range in these seas. Hee promiseth out dispatche from Melicke courteous complement to be given to Cogee daut in writing he being a principall man in the government. Noe talke but of Melicke's greatness. All the goods became spoils to the soldiers. The robbery nowe fat heard upon Mounsier can the Portugall renegado who is fled from Khirkee to the Mughall. A faire for all commers in the camp of goods taken. The king and Melicke shared the carpetts and fine goods between them."[1] For some time Malik Ambar kept the English agent in suspense. The latter tried to discuss this matter of compensation in private but failed, because the seizure of the Nizam Shahi ships by the English captain had made the matters too complicated for him. In his report dated 30th October 1621, he mentions, that "Malicke in private and not to be spoken with all."[2] The fact of the matter is that the seizure of the Nizam Shahi ships by the English had roused Malik Ambar's temper to the extent that in the end he had to dismiss the English agent with these words, "no resitution and no compensation.[3] Mr. Jefferies thus found himself in a very awkward situation. He was left with no other alternative than that of returning to Surat by land route. He

[1] See, William Foster, *English Factories in India 1618 - 1621*, p. 315.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 317.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 318.

reached Surat in November, where he told the Council about the stern attitude of Malik Ambar with regard to compensation.[1]

Yet it must be said to the credit of Malik Ambar that he accorded a befitting reception to Mr. Jefferies. Khwaja Daud, a merchant greatly held in esteem by Malik Ambar was sent to recieve him and escort him to the court, so that the matter could be settled. The matter could have been settled but for the mistake of his own officials, who had laid their hands on the Nizam Shahi ships. When he reached Surat, he recieved the news of the arrival of new fleet from England. This led him to believe that his position had become stronger and that "we shall hold the Melicke to more reasonable conditions in satisfying our masters' losses and by means (of conference with him) thereof will stand on terms on better advantage." In fact Mr. Jefferies was completely mistaken in his calculations. It was impossible for any one to convince Malik Ambar that the demand of the English for compensation were just especially when they behaved in arbitrary manner and seized his ships twice. However only normal courtesies were observed by Malik Ambar and by his naval officers, for Mr. Jefferies in his letter mentions that, "Seede that Ambar, Seede acute and Seede Riham, do in all love salute Mr. Kerridge and intreat esteem with Mellique. They have his respects accordingly with friendly usage into the all whereof for our parts doe make no question." Thus with all hopes and good intentions, Mr. Jefferies proceeded to meet Malik Ambar but returned without, "restitution or expectation." In despair he wrote from Surat to the Company on 18th November 1621 that, "I came from the treatie of Melicke Ambar with violent speede whereby I have distempered my body."

Realising that there was no chance of getting any compensation from Malik Ambar, the Surat factors not only confiscated the Chaul vessel but also a few more ships. It was agreed upon that next year a few English vessels should move from Red Sea and lay hands upon the ships to be found at Chaul and Dabhol. The plan was successfully implemented. A few more ships were seized by the English generals and the passengers were deprived of 7000 rials. Since these passengers were subjects of the Deccani rulers, the conduct of the English factors eliminated

[1] See William Foster, *English Factories in India*, pp. 296-97.

all the possibilities of friendship between them and Malik Ambar. Both parties now began to distrust and misunderstand each other. Therefore compromise was out of question.

But the Surat factors found it difficult to forget about the loss they had incurred. In July 1622 A.D. they once more opened negotiations with Malik Ambar's agent "for the restoration of juncks on the condition that the English would return back the Nizam Shahi ships if Malik Ambar agreed to pay the prime cost of the goods in their caravan i.e. Rs. 210,000 plus Rs. 3000 for the private loss of the factors. Rastell and his colleagues waited for more than six months in the hope that these terms would be accepted by Malik Ambar and money would be paid by him. But he too found it difficult to crack the nut. For settling his accounts with him, it was also suggested to the President of the English factory at Surat by Company's servants like Edward Heynes, John Parker and William Hill that, 2 If Melicke Ambar's performance with you depend on the friendship and coule of the Dutch then we may think of finishing that business it assurdly doubtful for see as far we may collect by conference with them they have no resolution to be at peace with any. Yf voylance and the avenge may produce them profit." (Letter dated 5th Feb., 1623). Perhaps thinking that the assistance of the Dutch would be of no use, the Company decided to resort to severe steps. On 18th Feb, 1623 it was decided to send the blessing and Reformation to Chaul and Dabhol to seize any junks there preparing for the Red Sea and to bring them to Surat, "for satisfaction for the lost Caphilla". Even this decision could not be implemented by the Company because Malik Ambar's agents always kept them in suspense. It was on 24th Feb., 1623 A.D. that the President of the Council at Surat gave instructions to Captain Hall regarding the seizure of the ships. This was done with a view to curtail the influence of the Portuguese and the Dutch on Malik Ambar and also to divert their attention.

Secret preparations had been going on at Chaul and Dabhol to face the crisis. Malik Ambar and the Portuguese both knew the mind of the English. Captain John Hall who had been deputed to go to Dabhol was sent a letter dated 22nd Feb., 1623 A.D. by the President of the Surat Council, which mentioned, "as it is understood that certain junks are being prepared for

Red Sea in the ports of Chaul and Dabhol and it is deemed advisable to seize them in satisfaction of the losses sustained from the Deccan nation," Captain Hall was asked to sail in the Blessings with Richard Wedmore in the Reformation and two merchants to Chaul to assist them." The latter vessel was to be left at Chaul to scour the port and the former was to proceed to Dabhol." All junks seized should be brought to Swally and handed over intact to the Council. The crew is to be set on shore. Care is to be taken to put a sufficient crew into each prize. He is to return before time of the Whale's departure for Mokha. Any Indian junks met with that are not provided with an English pass port should also be seized."

Even after the issue of these instructions, we find that the matter regarding the seizure of ships belonging to Malik Ambar continued to tax the mind of Mr. Rastell and his colleagues. It seems that Malik Ambar had maintained a strong navy at the coast and his naval strength was quite adequate to unnerve the Europeans. In short a sort of tussle continued between the English and Malik Ambar; the former very keen to establish a base and the latter fully determined to throw them out of Indian waters. The contents of the letter dated 23rd March, 1623 A.D. confirm Company's firmness in the matter. The letter reads, "Reference is made to previous consultation on Feb., 13th and Ocober 23rd, 1623 A.D., at both of which the idea of seizing the junks of the country was approved and as the Dutch contnue their resolution of surprising ships from the Deccan ports, it is propounded whether the project shall be put into execution this year at the return of the ships now bound for Red Sea. It is urged that they have no other means of obtaining redress of their losses and wrongs and that the present opportunity is favourable one as the Company's estate in India is very small while that of the natives now abroad or about to be sent is usually large. The chief objections are that there would be risk of trade being totally lost and the merchants on the shore at the time would be liable to the rigerous treatment to which it is answered that they have the authority of the Company for risking the trade and that they are one and all prepared to endure any hardships that may result from their action. It is therefore decided unanimously that the project shall be put in action by the most convenient and dertaynest

means they could devise." The manner how and the place where the said seizure might be most convenient and secritie bee affected, is left to the decision of the Council appointed for the Voyage, with the limitations that no vessel shall be seized outward bound for Mokha noe homeward to the onward of Aden, "that the fleet shall not return with its captures earlier than the end of October and that no prize crews be put on the board of the junks. In lieu thereof the principall persons of each vessel are to be taken on the board the English ships and well treated. To assist the guarding the prizes" and to secure the grete estate already laden upon the Whale and Daulphin for England," it was decided that on his return from Dabhol, Captain Hall would be ordered to accompany them with two ships under his command. For deciding all the matters of importance a council was appointed. It consisted of Captain Hall, the four merchants and Master Woodock. The masters of other ships were to be admitted, "for advice but are not to have votes," while all purely merchantile questions are to be settled by only four merchants. In case of the death of a member the survivors would elect to vacancy. The merchants appointed for the voyage were Messers Salbancke, Henyes, Hoare and Cripse, with Richard Garret as assistant. The Whale and the Dolphin were to sail in company and the former could leave behind her "the goods not yet shipped, which she is to take to England . . . after the seizures have been made the Reformation (if present) should be sent in advance to apprise the factors at Surat."

Thus for the first time elaborate arrangements were made for proper implementation of the plan. Instructions were also given to the merchants regarding the sale and purchase of goods and also to the Captains of various fleets arriving during this period. The fleets moved, operations started and the tussle began. In Feb., 1623 *Blessings* anchored at Dabhol. She was welcomed by the people of the town. For five or six days trading went on amicably. But on the appearance of *Reformation* a sudeen change took place. In March 1623, after facing many hardships and suffering great losses the English had to withdraw their ships. After this loss the English came to terms with the Mughals in Nov., 1623. It was settled that (i) the claims due from Malik Ambar should not be insisted upon (2) that

the English could recoup themselves by seizing goods of the merchants of Chaul and Dabhol, wherever they could find them (3) that the Mughals would help the English in recovering the balances from Malik Ambar (4) and it was agreed upon that the Mughal Emperor will send a *firman* together with a letter from the English Campany through a *ahadi* to Malik Ambar to demand their "due from him."

In spite of their persistent efforts and the assistance they took from the Mughals and the Dutch, for compelling Malik Ambar to conclude treaty or pay compensation, the English failed. The treaty with Malik Ambar was more important than compensation for, it was to provide them a base on the western coast to counter-act the influence of the Portuguese and safe-guard their commercial interests in India. But so long as Malik Ambar was alive he continued to regard the English as enemy of his country. No place, no base, no compensation and no concessions to the English and the Dutch remained the guiding principles of his relations with the two powers.

CHAPTER VI

HIS CHARACTER AND ACHIEVEMENTS

THE life long work of a person remains behind to remind the coming generations of his successes and failures in the varied fields of activity. A century after the death of Malik Ambar, Bhimsen the author of *Nuskha-i-Dilkusha* stated that, "although Malik Ambar was dead but his sweet fragrance remains behind." His personality reflected the importance of his work and his achievements. Without him the annals of the Deccan from 1600 to 1626 A.D. would have remained a mere uninteresting record of monotonous events. His dynamism, grace and charm impart attractiveness to the history of the period and save it from dullness. His portrait as drawn by the famous Mughal painter Mir Hashim of the Deccani-Rajput school, reproduces description of his personality by his contemporary and later historians and the foreign travellers. Peter Van Den Broecke, the famous Dutch traveller while describing his personality writes, "that this Malik Ambar is a blak Kafir from Abyssinia or Piester John's country. He has a strong stern Roman face and strong body with white glazed eyes which were very unbecoming." While according to Ravestyn, "he is a substantial man in body and limb of more than middle height, black as Moor." Echoeing the same view Dr. B.P. Saksena remarks, "he was dark complexioned and tall having long tapering arms, broad chest, narrow waist and stout and thick set neck like that of a lion. Every limb of his body betokened vigour and vitality; boldness appeared from his face, determination from his lips and farsightedness from his eyes. Indeed he was gifted with all the qualities befitting a leader of men."

Born in a poor family, trained in the school of adversity and he grew up in the midst of hostile conditions. By sheer

dint of his sterling qualities of head and heart he rose from poverty to affluence. In courage, capacity and genius he could be easily compared with some of the renowned Sultans of the Slave Dynasty. He possessed Aibak's fearlessness, Iltutmish's liberality and Balban's determination. In some respects he was nearer to Mahmud Gawan and Shivaji. It has already been related that in his early life he had been deprived of the benign protection of his parents. As slave he worked with loyalty and devotion towards his masters. He imbibed some of the best qualities of his second master Changiz Khan. But he hardly ever enjoyed a spell of peace for long. The death of his patron threw him into the depth of sorrow and helplessness. Amidst darkness he clamoured for light. Difficulties made him strong, ironed his nerves and created confidence in him to the extent that in future he could stand upon his own. He fought against the heavy odds, overcame the most heavy odds. The uncertain political climate of the Nizam Shahi kingdom, the selfish designs of Abhang Khan, the shifting loyalties of the Abyssinian adventurers, and the patriotic feelings of the people among whom he lived shaped his mind. His ambition never faltered even when in distress and disappointment stared him in the face. He never lost courage even in the midst of gloom and despair. His energy was boundless and his firmness uncommon and his intelligence extraordinary. In this respect he was superior to his contemporaries. "In medieval India he was one of the most imposing personalities of his times not only in the Deccan but also in whole of India. His undaunted heroism, commanding talents, unfailing resourcefulness and inflexible determination to preserve the dignity of the state enabled him to solve successfully all the problems of his times." Indeed, he was charming in his manners, dignified in his behaviours and firm in his resolve. His one mission in life was to throw back the tide of Mughal aggression in the Deccan, to revive the drooping fortunes of the Nizam Shahi kingdom which the providence had handed over to his charge.

The famous traveller Peter Della Valle has given an interesting account of Malik Ambar. True that it is not fully reliable for it is based on hearsay, but it still records in a general way his impression of a towering personality. He writes, "that the Nizam Shah was reigning as a boy of twelve years old, who

therefore doth not govern it but an Abyssinian slave of Moor's religion called Malik Ambar, administers the state in his stead and that with small authority at this day his territory is more generally known and called by the name of Malik's country than the kingdom of Nizam Shah. Nevertheless, Malik Ambar governs not fraudulently and with the design to usurp by keeping the king shut as I have sometimes heard but according as I have better understood since the persons informed near hand he administers with great fidelity and submission towards the young king to whom nevertheless they say, he hath provided or given his wife, a daughter of his own, upon security that he himself shall be governor of the whole state as long as he lives." "This Malik Ambar is a man of great parts and fit for government but as they say very impious addicted to socer, whereby 'tis thought that he keeps himself in favour with his king and that for works of enchantments, he hath with certain superstition which in these countries, killing hundred of slave's children and others and offering them as sacrifice to the invoked devils with other abominable stories which I have heard but because not seen by myself I affirm not for true." There is more truth in the first part of the statement than in the second one, for one may find all sorts of silly things in the narrative of the foreign travellers.

His sincerity and loyalty to the Nizam Shahi house is above any shadow of doubt. With single-minded devotion, he strove to attain his objectives. Unmindful of the unsurmountable difficulties and multitudinous hurdles he gathered his resources, inculcated confidence among his men and thereby improved his striking power. His perseverence was proverbial. Serious reverses never perplexed him. On the contrary, they encouraged him to undertake fresh ventures. For about a quarter of a century he waged relentless struggle against the Mughals, Bijapuris, Portuguese and the English. He had his own methods of dealing with the enemy. He displayed shrewdness in organising grand coalitions of the Deccani powers against the Mughals. Having made full use of his allies and having attained his objective, he would turn against those very powers which had helped him. The idea of forming a permanent alliance and everlasting peace was foreign to his mind. His immediate interest determined his plans and tactics. Nor did he always

depend upon the sharpness of his own sword. He roused the patriotic feelings of the local population, made the rulers of the Deccan realise the necessity of safeguarding the cultural traditions and political independence of their country. He successfully persuaded them to champion the cause of the fallen Nizam Shahi house by extending him assistance against the Mughal aggression. Consequently, he came to be looked upon as their saviour. Though a foreigner in the country of his adoption, he was loved and respected by every section of Hindu and Muslim population. And certainly without the support of the people it would have been not possible for him to continue his wars against the enemies of the Nizam Shahi kingdom. His successful resistance of the Mughals, his firm dealings with the Portuguese and the English and the Dutch show the extent of his courage and resourcefulness. His greatest contribution was the military training which he imparted to the Marathas, which sowed the seeds of nationalism in them. It was due to his patronage that a number of Maratha families rose to power and eminence. Lakhoji Jadhav Rao, Maloji, Kheloji, Persoji, Shahji, Babaji Kayath, and many others displayed their military skill and helped in materialising his plans. He also enjoyed the cooperation of his Abyssinian followers like Yakut Khan, Adham Khan, Sidi Ambar, Sidi Rihan besides that of many other Muslims. In the interregnums between wars he always turned his attention to the civil and military administration of the country. He established law and order by suppressing highway robbery and by inflicting exemplary punishments on the thieves and *thugs*. He also introduced a new system of land revenue which not only safeguarded the interests of the cultivators but also made them happy and prosperous.

His claim to greatness rests upon his genius as general and successful administrator. As a military leader he was unrivalled in his age. The Khan Khanan, Shah Nawaz Khan, Darab Khan, Rahmandad, Abdullah Khan Firuz Jang, Khan Jahan Lodi, Raja Man Singh, Bir Singh Bundela Maha Singh and other well known generals and able commanders failed to stand before his superior tactics and war strategy. He reorganised the Nizam Shahi army on a new pattern. He revitalised the military organisation from the view point of offence and defence both. He devoted his time and energy to improving the different

branches of his army. The pressure of the Mughal invasions, the activities of the Portuguese and the English had compelled to be always alert, and keep infantry, cavalry, artillery and navy on war footing.

For the defence of the country it was essential to maintain a chain of forts and fortresses. In fact, in those days the strength of a kingdom depended upon the number of forts and fortresses and their proper maintenance. Although there is very little on the record as to what was Malik Ambar's contribution in this direction, but on the basis of what is available it can be said that he adequately provisioned the hill forts of Junnar, Daultabad, Ahmadnagar and Parenda and made arrangements for their defence according to the contemporary conditions and technique. It was because of this that he was able to beat off the repeated attacks of the enemy for a fairly long time. He does not seem to have used the foot soldiers except in critical circumstances. In 1625, while fighting against the Portuguese at Ravadanda he requisitioned 100 foot-soldiers *(hasham)* from the *karkoons* of Chaul. In comparison to infantry, cavalry in the Deccan was of great use from every point of view. For its organisation Malik Ambar appointed a separate Commander-in-chief, named Sidi Yakut Khan. He had to work under the direction of Malik Ambar. He neither formulated any military policy nor was supposed to look after the entire military organisation. His only work was to look after the requirements of the standing army and make proper arrangement for it in times of war. Malik Ambar's cavalry consisted of 10,000 Marathas in 1609, 40,000 in the closing months of 160϶ and 40,000 to 50,000 horse about the year 1624 A.D. He effectively trained his cavalry men, inculcated a new spirit in them and made them conversant with the new system of warfare, which suited the local conditions and the genius. The essence of new military tactics lay in avoiding pitched battles and fighting in open ground.

The light Maratha cavalry was always engaged in hovering on the right and the left flanks of the enemy, cutting of their lines of communication, intercepting their supplies, seizing their provisions and delivering surprise attacks on their camps in the night. Whenever caught in a trap the Maratha *bargis* would in the first instance fight the enemy and then disperse in

different directions and collect again and take the enemy by surprise. They appeared and disappeared like lightning. During the rainy season they used to become more active and caused much trouble to the enemy. Malik Ambar made use of these light Maratha forces and won one success after the other. In fact, his strength lay in the guerilla warfare. The horsemen were divided into two categories, *bargis* and *silehdars*. The first were regular servants of the king, trained, maintained and paid by them and for which the government paid them a lump sum amount annually according to the speculated number of troops. The government had a greater hold on the *bargis* than on the *silehdars*. As to the efficiency, loyalty and honesty the latter could not be relied always. Therefore Malik Ambar always looked towards the *bargis*. Besides, these two categories of troops there was also a third namely, troops maintained by the feudal chiefs. But Malik Ambar seldom called upon these feudal chiefs to supply troops. Artillery and elephantry also formed the integral part of Malik Ambar's army. Light cannons and guns were loaded on the backs of elephants and often utilised in battering the walls of the fort and fortresses. But his success against the enemy depended upon the efficient spy system. He never failed to obtain fullest and minutest information about the movements of the enemy, its strength and its weak points.

He not only surpassed in thep redatory war or guerilla tactics but equally excelled in pitched battles. He had closely studied the Mughal tactics in the battles of Nander and Roshangarh and applied the same against the combined forces of Adil Shah and the Mughals in the battle of Bhatvadi. According to G.S. Sardesai, "the success was mainly due to Malik Ambar's superior tactics of long and patient maneuvering for contriving an inescapable trap in which the Mughal and the Bijapuri forces were caught." On earlier occasions too he had near failed to display his qualities as efficient general and commander. He knew when to strike the enemy and when to wait for a suitable opportunity. The circumstances leading to the battle of Bhatvadi confirm this contention. When he came to know of the progress of the combined forces of Adil Shah and the Mughals from Burhanpur under Mulla Muhammad Lari towards Bijapur, he decided to withdraw from the environs

of Bijapur. While he was retreating he was hotly pursued by the Adil Shah forces. Finding himself surrounded from the two sides, he repeatedly negotiated for peace with Bijapur. But when his efforts failed he selected his own ground stopped there, made full arrangements for a pitched battle and began to wait for suitable moment to open the offensive. He struck the enemy at the right moment and inflicted a crushing defeat on them.

It was beyond the power of his enemies to cope with his tactics. The speedy mobilisation of his troops from one point to another, his changing tactics and guerilla methods of warfare caused tremendous headache to his enemies especially the Mughals. At the same time their failure to stand before him confirmed their short-sightedness and bankruptcy of their military skill. He subjected them to miserable plight. More than once he carried war into the very heart of Malwa and Gujarat and once he laid siege to the Mughal headquarters at Burhanpur. It was his daring personality, shrewdness and far-sightedness which inspired his followers to dash into Malwa, levy contributions and create fresh problems for the Mughal government by plundering and devastating the surrounding territory. It is true that Prince Shahjahan won victory twice over him but his success on both the occasions was more showy than real. In spite of his superiority of numbers and resources he failed to seize even an inch of territory or a single fort from the hands of Malik Ambar. In fact he could not even touch the basic reservoir of his resources. Each time, no sooner did the prince turn his back than Malik Ambar started the counter offensive, driving the enemy across the Narbada and recovering his losses.

The author of *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, Mutmand Khan, who has never omitted to abuse Malik Ambar by calling him dark-faced and ill-fortuned Abyssinian slave could not resist from describing his fine qualities as general and statesman. He writes, "Malik Ambar was a slave but an able man. In warfare, in command, in sound judgement and in administration he had no equal or rival . . . . History records no instance of an Abyssinian slave arriving at such eminence" Nor did the Emperor Jahangir forget to mention a little about him. Being impressed by his dynamic personality his heir forced him to admire him and his

greatness. He in his autobiography mentions, "in the art of soldiering Malik Ambar was unique in his age. He put down the disorderly elements in his country and spent his noble life honourably."

As a politician too, Malik Ambar stood far above his contemporaries. With his sound judgement, extraordinary tactfulness and military skill he was able to save the Nizam Shahi kingdom from total extinction. He quickly rose equal to the occasion, diagnosed the malady from which the Nizam Shahi kingdom was suffering and promptly addressed himself to the task of finding out the suitable remedy. The task was difficult for he neither had a large following nor had a king or capital. He revived the collapsing administrative machinery, infused life into it and slowly made it work in accordance with the requirements of the situation. The problems which confronted him were baffling, but with the cooperation of the people he solved every one of them. He believed in internal peace and external security. With one single weapon in his hand i.e. the popular support he attained both the objectives. In an atmosphere of political fluidity, when war and peace had no value he played his cards successfully. He befriended the Khan Khanan, the Adil Shah and the Qutb Shah when it suited him and never failed to turn against them when he found them that they were against him. He solicited the support of the Portuguese when he required it, but never allowed them to act against his wishes. He refused to extend assistance to prince Shahjahan when he appeared as rebel, but subsequently the same prince returned and agreed to play his game he welcomed him and supported him. So cleverly did he handle his foes and friends that he gave them no opportunity to doubt his *bona fides*.

The rulers of the Deccan always believed in the dictum that isolation leads to annihilation. The Hindu rulers of the Deccan, the Bahmani Sultans and the rulers of five independent states, which rose on the ashes of the Bahmani kingdom entered into mutual alliances, affirmed their friendship but after the purpose had been served they never hesitated to break those alliances or to fight amongst them. The struggle to gain political supremacy always forced the weaker to join the stronger and thereby safeguard its interest. In the situation when the Deccan was threatened by the Mughal aggression and

its flanks were being nibled by the foreigners no state could afford to pursue an independent line of action or live in a state of isolation. When Malik Ambar came to the fore-front to play his part on the political stage of the Deccan, he too realised that neither could he live in isolation nor could he himself drive away the Mughals from the Deccan. Therefore he made it a cardinal principle of his policy to seek the support of the Deccan states. Considerations of self-protection drive them in his arms. Excepting the Portuguese the other states were compelled to accept occasionally the Mughal suzerainty but they never failed to afford help to Malik Ambar secretly with men and money. It was his genius which made them realise the danger and enabled them to come closer and offer strong opposition to the Mughals. With Sher Shah's example before him, he is said to have written to Ibrahim Adil Shah, "that it is my desire to fight the Mughal troops so long as life remains in my body. It may be through your Majesty's increasing fortune that I shall expel the Mughals from the Deccan. Unfortunately he could not do the impossible, but still he successfully checked their forward onrush. In a way he attempted to change the course of history but he could not succeed in the task. He, however, set the precedent, which was later on followed by the Marathas under Shivaji and his successors and who completed the task. The pressure of the English and the Dutch on the western coast, the declining fortunes of the Portuguese, the fragrant desertion of the Marathas joined to his advancing age did not permit him to shatter the imperial fabric. The time too was not yet ripe for it. But he did give some shattering blows to it.

He was a successful administrator also. Even in the midst of his stormy life he spared no pains in devising a suitable administrative system for the country. It has earlier been related that almost all the political institutions of the Nizam Shahis had been adopted by him. After crushing the factious strife, lawlessness and turbulence, he geared the administrative machinery and made it work smoothly and efficiently. Like Sher Shah he too believed that the existence and the survival of a state depends upon the goodwill of the people, impartiality, justice and benevolence. Working on these lines, he evolved out a system which not only strengthened his position at home

but also made him famous outside. He earned the gratitude of his people and their undying reverence.

He was liberal in his outlook and in keeping with the Nizam Shahi traditions he followed the policy of religious toleration. Nowhere it is recorded that Malik Ambar's hands ever fell on the Hindu temples or that he forced the Hindus to embrace Islam. Hindus, Muslims, Christians had complete freedom of worshipping their own Gods and Goddesses. The Marathas and the Muslims, the Christians and Abyssians all served him with loyalty and devotion. They feared and respected him and were always ready to lay their lives for him.

His sense of justice was very high. Peter Van Den Broecke mentions, "The Melicke maintains good laws and administration in the country. He punishes the criminals and thieves severely so that you can safely travel with gold through his country. If any one gets drunk he promptly has melted lead poured down his throat. No body on the pain of death offer strong drink for sale or travel with it through the country." While according to Ravestyn, "there is very good justice here and he is respected by every one." All people lived happily in his regime and his fame as upholder of law spread far and wide. Khafi Khan, the author of *Muntakhab-ul-Laubab*, has narrated a story which throws light on this aspect of his character. Just after the battle of Bhatvadi, when the Bijapuri and the Mughal captives were brought before him, he not only scolded them for their cowardly behaviour but also ordered that each of them should be punished with 100 straps. Among the prisoners was a poet and *mansabdar* of 1500. When his turn of punishment came, he exclaimed, "I heard that Malik Ambar is just and upright but it was a mistake for me to think so. Would'nt be just to punish a *mansabdar* of 1500 and 3000 in the same manner." Malik Ambar was highly pleased to listen to these words and excused him. Since then his fame as the distributor of justice became a byword in the Bijapuri and Mughal camps.

Throughout his life Malik Ambar remained busy in waging campaigns against the Mughals, Bijapuris, Portuguese, Qutb Shahis and the English for defending and reviving the tottering Nizam Shahi kingdom, yet whenever he found time he did not fail to do something for the welfare of the people in general and peasantry in particular. He was firmly convinced that the

strength of a state depends upon the condition and well being of the cultivators, which in no way was better in 1601 A.D. The confusion that prevailed after the death of Murtaza Nizam Shah I and after the arrival of the Mughal forces for the conquest of the fort of Ahmadnagar, gave a blow to the administrative machinery. Though the contemporary records do not mention anything about the condition of peasantry, but it can be surmised that on account of the confusion and fear of the Mughal attacks, the peasants would have abandoned the fields and fled to the neighbouring states. Under such impelling conditions, the Nizam Shahi state must have lost the land revenue. The disappearance of the local industries paralysed trade and commerce and which in turn must have hit hard the finances of the state. Since the chain was broken, greater financial confusion prevailed between 1595 and 1600 A.D. While defending itself he lost everything. Whatever there was in the royal exchequer, partly it was taken away by Ahmad Nizam Shah II and partly by the Mughals. In short, in 1600 A.D. when Malik Ambar assumed charge of his new responsibilities, financial problems stared him in the face. In order to rehabilitate the finances he restored law and order in the area under his control. The restoration of the normal conditions brought about the resumption of commercial activities.

A little later, Malik Ambar started improving the conditions of the peasantry in two ways. Firstly, by giving them encouragement and secondly, by introducing a new system of land revenue. The land revenue system as introduced by him immortalised his name in every village of the Nizam Shahi kingdom. So much popularity did his system attain that after the extinction of the Nizam Shahi kingdom, Dadji Kondev revived his wise regulations and Shivaji also adopted them after making a few modifications. His land revenue administration was based on the pattern developed by Raja Todar Mal in the north. Todar Mal's famous "*dahsala*" system was adopted and modified to suit the requirements of the cultivators and also the local conditions. Very much like its counter-part in northern India, Malik Ambar's system also took into account the correct data of cultivable land and the money value of the crops. Like Todar Mal he also divided the arable land into separate classes according to the fertility and ascertained their

produce roughly and fixed the government demand once for all.

While introducing such a system, Malik Ambar had three objects in view before him (i) to promote the interests of the peasants (ii) to improve agriculture (iii) to eliminate as far as possible the middle agencies, and to establish direct relationship of the government with the cultivators. To attain these objectives, he started with the abolition of farming system. According to the prevailing practice the land revenue was fixed with the help of hereditary revenue supervisors, accountants, known as deshmukhs, deshpandes, and patils. Apart from the other considerations, the high-handedness of the big landholders, in the preceding period had compelled the ordinary cultivators to abandon their profession and their fields. This had given a set-back to agriculture. Malik Ambar was quite aware of this fact and therefore he decided to establish direct relationship of the cultivators with the government after rehabilitating them. With one stroke of pen he did away with the multiplicity of the middle agencies and made the village headman or patil or the revenue officers hereditary and made them responsible for the realisation of the government demands in full. Each *patil* or revenue collector was required to collect the revenue of entire village under his jurisdiction and to remit it directly to the state treasury. Likewise each small landholder was required to pay full share of the rent to the *patil* of his village.

To determine and fix the government demand Malik Ambar adopted Todar Mal's method of surveying and classifying the arable land. The land was surveyed not by measuring it but by throwing a glance at it. This was known as *nazar pahni*. The land was classified into good, bad, middling etc. In his system the *bigha* did not indicate any precise unit of measurement, but it only indicated the area of holding on which the amount of rent was to be realised. No wonder therefore, that in some cases the cultivator had to pay twice for the less fertile land than another holding fertile land, because the demand in either case was the same. Thus the word *bigha* indicated the crop yielding powers of a particular area and not the size of holding.

In his experiment to fix the average yield per *bigha*, Malik Ambar only took arable land into consideration. Hills were

excluded. Where the whole of the arable land of the village had been ascertained in accordance with the ancient practice, it was divided into two categories (i) *baghyat* or garden lands (ii) *ziryat* or corn lands. So far as the corn lands were concerned, they were further divided into four classes, *avval*, *dom*, *som* and *Chaharim* (first, second, third and fourth grade lands). Likewise the uplands were also classified but in a general way. Those lands which were meant for the government revenue or were given in *inam* (gift) were classified into two categories (i) *khalsa* (crown lands) (ii) *inamat* (land given in gift). After deducting the total area of the latter from the former, the actual area of crown or Khalsa land was known. While indicating the area of khalsa land, separate entries were also made with regard to the area occupied by the gardens and the area meant for actual cultivation of corn.

In the revenue records the first to be mentioned was the area of land given in *inam* or gift. There were three categories of it (a) land held by one person (b) the land held by two persons (dumla or vatandars (iii) lands given in gift to temples, mosque and the village officers. After the total revenue thus sequestrated had been estimated the details of assessment of *Khalsa* land were mentioned. In addition to the land tax there were various cesses. Sometimes, their rates remained fixed, awhile at others, it varied from time to time. These cesses were realised from craftsmen, shop-keepers and village servants.

Unfortunately, it is not known as to what portion of the produce, Malik Ambar took as government's share. According to Captain Tobertson, "Malik Ambar probably adopted Todar Mal's plan and fixed the rent at 1/4th of the yield." While according to the others, he took 2/5th of the total produce in kind as state share. It is also stated that when payment in kind was commuted into cash payment, it came to 1/4th of the total yield. It appears that until the year 1614, the state demand was 1/4th of the total produce, but the pressure of the Mughal attacks forced him to double the state demand.

As regards the conversion rates, normally they did not vary with the fluctuation of prices of grains in the market. It appears that the average normal payment called "*tankha*" was fixed for each plot of surveyed land in each village. In fact the actual collections varied from year to year. Several factors were

responsible for it, for example, rains, security, fertility, soil, existing political conditions etc. Therefore the collections did not depend only on harvest but also on several other factors. If the season was bright and the conditions peaceful, the actual collections increased and vice versa.

Another remarkable feature in his scheme was, that survey and assessment was always made on a sympathetic basis. Perhaps like Sher Shah, Malik Ambar had also given instructions to the revenue officers, "to be lenient at the time of survey and assessment and strict at the time of collection." However, on both cases the peasant was completely satisfied. Moderate demand and assurances of safety definitely gave impetus to agriculture. It also enables the *patils* to give waste lands at low rates to the cultivators to reclaim and cultivate them. In this manner in a short time all the waste lands were transformed into cultivable ones. Again, Malik Ambar left to the peasant the choice of payment either in cash or in kind but the payment in cash was always preferred.

Again, instead of making the state the landowner, Malik Ambar sought to strengthen the government by giving the land to the cultivators and making them sole owners. This also increased their interests in the land held by them. They came to consider it as their private property and did their best to develop it and raise cash crops. The cultivable land, thus was made the joint property of the village, a part of it was held by the individual cultivators, while the other was tilled by headman's tenants, who received a portion of the crop as their share. The fallow land was utilised by all. The greatest contribution of Malik Ambar was that he attached the cultivators to the soil, whether he served as tenant of the landholder or worked in an independent capacity. In fact his excellent measures served two purposes. They satisfied the people and strengthened the government and secondly, they led the cultivation of those lands which might not have been neglected and must have deprived the government a share of revenue. Malik Ambar's system had thus two great merits. Firstly, it laid emphasis on the moderate and permanent demand and secondly, it encouraged the cultivators to take much more interest in their land.

But unfortunately, certain drawbacks remained in his land revenue system. The land was never carefully surveyed on

account of uncertain political conditions, then existing in the Deccan and the pressure of Mughal invasions. The practice of glance estimation was also extremely defective because it did not help in arriving at correct assessment of the actual produce Nor was at any time an attempt made to measure the cultivable land without which it was difficult to know the actual yield per *bigha*. Further for the different categories of land, the state share was the same. Obviously, the cultivators holding better quality of land were always at a greater advantage than others, who held the bad quality of land. This was also one of the defects in Sher Shah's system. Moreover, as the settlement was made with the headman or the *patil* of the village and not with the individual cultivators, it must have given opportunities to the former to use his power and influence and behave like middle agencies. In other words, Malik Ambar's system substituted one evil for the other. The place of middle agencies was taken by the hereditary *patils*. Then there was another defect, i.e. that there were different units of measurement and hence there could be no uniformity either in the method of surveying the land or assessing the produce. True that all these defects could not attract his attention, still he made attempts to remove some of them. We must take into consideration the limited time which was at his disposal and multifarious problems which confronted him. As against the *patils*, whom he had made hereditary, he took precaution. He entrusted the management of the revenue affairs to persons of different nationalities each serving as a check upon the growing influence and power of the other. The administration of land revenue though entirely remained into the hands of the Brahmans, but they had to work under the supervision of the Muslim officers, who acted as a check on their high-handedness. This measure of Malik Ambar proved to be of great advantage to the cultivators. Besides, his personal supervision and close vigilance prevented the officers from becoming greedy and selfish. Consequently, during his regime agriculture thrived, the country became populous and finances of the state became stable. This itself was by no means a small achievement.

In short Malik Ambar's revenue reforms not only yielded rich dividends in terms of money but also added considerably to his reputation. His name, as reformer of revenue administration

came to be remembered by every family in the Deccan. He earned the gratitude of the producing classes by looking after their interests and giving them impetus, to produce more by reclaiming the waste lands. Despite the defects in the system, the income of the government increased so much that the Nizam Shahi kingdom had never to face financial crisis.

Malik Ambar was a man of varied tastes. Like his contemporaries, he was interested in architecture also. He founded the town on Khirki in 1605 A.D., called it after his son's name Fatehnagar, which later on came to be known as the famous city of Aurangabad. Here he built many mosques and palaces, planted gardens and excavated canals. The most remarkable feat of engineering skill was the system of water supply to the new city. For this purpose a deep underground channel was dug to bring water to the new capital. Although most of the buildings are in ruins, they depict the interest of the man who constructed them. The *Bhadkal darwaza*, *Nakhuda Mahal*, which consisted of five *zenana* buildings, *Diwan-i-Khas*, *Diwan-i-Am*, cisterns, big baths and *Kala Chabutra*, were some of the buildings constructed by him. He also built a church of which now solitary walls remain, but which testify his liberal attitude towards different religions and their followers. Had these been in tact and in existence, they would have possibly thrown some light on their shape, elegance, style, and ornamentation. However, by looking only at the ruins one can safely imagine for a while that there was a towering personality of Malik Ambar with elegant and fine tastes, who wished to leave his name in every piece of stone in those architectural monuments.

True to the cultural traditions of the Nizam Shahis, Malik Ambar also patronised, men of letters and promoted learning. It is related that the scholars used to flock to his court from the distant lands of Arabia and Persia. One of the greatest among them was Shilli Hadrani, the author of *Iqad-al-Jawahar*. Shilli records that there were a large number of poets at his court. These poets used to read eulogistic verses and were handsomely rewarded by their patron. This shows that he was fairly a cultured man, who loved the society of the learned and pious. It is also mentioned that at Khirki, he constructed a house of learning known as "*chita-Khana*" where the Hindu

Pandits, learned men and scholars used to assemble and study the different branches of learning.

Malik Ambar no doubt was a strong man and a person known for his firm determination and heroism, but at the same time he had in him elements of generosity and kindness. He ever maintained a proper balance between his mind and heart. He was quite famous for his charity and benevolence. Asad Khan has praised his benevolence in these words, "Verily, if the virtues of a tree of universe were to be set down even in parts, it would require a chapter nay an entire volume to do it." He was punctilious in the observance of the tenets of his faith and could capture the imaginations of the people by his simple living and high thinking. Twelve hundred men at every night used to recite the Holy Quran in his camp. He himself used to offer his prayers in the company of the common people, whose number was never less than a thousand. His charities are beyond description. Indeed he was simple, kind-hearted and generous man.

Thus, for twenty six years Malik Ambar with his singular zeal, uncompromising determination, struggled against the heavy odds and bore quietly the shocks and jolts of the times. His enemies found it easy to bend him, put to stop for a while his rising ambitions but even they found it difficult to break him. Such was a person, whose achievements could be aptly compared with some of the renowned personalities of the medieval period.

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ERRATA

On page 55, Murtaza Nizam Shah III should be read as Murtaza Nizam Shah II.

On page 90, Raja Man Singh should be read as Raja Maha Singh.

On page 113, the word Dan, should be omitted.

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by

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